



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Governor Wolf to Nominate Insurance Commissioner Teresa Miller to be Inaugural Secretary of Health and Human Services**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Governor Tom Wolf today announced his intention to nominate current Pennsylvania Insurance Commissioner Teresa Miller to serve as the inaugural Secretary of the prospective unified Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Miller has served as Insurance Commissioner since January 2015, where she has worked on a range of issues, including the administration's top priorities - fighting the heroin and opioid epidemic and helping seniors.

“Teresa Miller has established herself quickly in Pennsylvania as a leader in her field, an advocate for consumers and the less fortunate, and an effective administrator whose department quickly found new success in a challenging national environment,” Governor Wolf said. “Over the past two years, Commissioner Miller has fought to protect health care for seniors and kids, increased the department’s efforts for consumer protection and education, and made the department more transparent.

“She embodies the best of public service – effectively working across the aisle and state lines – to make the lives of Pennsylvanians better and more secure. It is my honor to ask her to be the inaugural leader of the prospective unified Department of Health and Human Services.”

Governor Wolf proposed integrating the Departments of Aging, Drug & Alcohol Programs, Health, and Human Services into a new, unified Department of Health & Human Services to deliver public health, social, and human services to Pennsylvanians in the most efficient and effective way by fostering innovation, creative thinking, and practical solutions. Over the past several months, Governor Wolf has worked closely with each of these four agencies to identify and break down silos and reimagine how we deliver such critical services.

Pennsylvanians can learn more about the proposed unified department and how it aims to improve services for populations such as seniors and those seeking substance use treatment [here](#).

Governor Wolf also announced his intention to nominate Jessica Altman, current Insurance Department Chief of Staff, to be Miller’s eventual replacement.

### **STANDING UP FOR SENIORS**

“Seniors have been a priority of mine at the insurance department,” Miller said. “Early in the administration, I worked closely with the governor to protect seniors who faced the loss of access to their doctors in Western Pennsylvania.”

Teresa Miller has been a leader in the administration’s efforts to protect seniors. Her work to ensure seniors in Western Pennsylvania were protected and would not lose access to their doctors helped prevent disruption in care for 180,000 by ensuring UPMC providers continued participation in Highmark’s Medicare networks.

In 2017, Teresa was named chair of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) Senior Issues Task Force. Also at the NAIC, Teresa has been a leader in taking on the current challenges of the long term care insurance markets. At her request, the NAIC created the Long Term Care Innovation (LTC) Task Force, which she now chairs and which is working to increase long term care funding options for consumers, including increasing the number of affordable asset protection options available.

Teresa has also looked for ways to innovate in long term care insurance in Pennsylvania, making a change to the requirements for long term care insurance policies that will allow lower-priced products to be considered LTC partnership products; products that allow consumers to retain some assets if they need to transition to Medicaid after exhausting their private coverage.

Teresa has taken on the challenge of the long term care insurance market, holding a public hearing to increase transparency into the market and the process by which rates are determined. Teresa feels strongly about keeping long term care insurance consumers informed, and often personally corresponds with consumers impacted by long term care insurance rate increases.

## **FIGHTING THE HEROIN AND OPIOID CRISIS**

“This will be a chance for me to continue working on issues I have been passionate about, in some cases for more than seventeen years, and issues that are top priorities for this governor,” Miller said. “Early in my career, I fought for state adoption of mental health parity legislation in Oregon, representing drug and alcohol treatment providers, social workers, the Arc of Oregon and other advocates for people with disabilities. Then, as the insurance regulator in Oregon, I worked to ensure consumers received the benefits of that law.”

Under Teresa's leadership, the Department of Insurance (PID) has begun a comprehensive strategy to ensure insurance companies are complying with all laws related to coverage for mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The strategy includes three prongs: increasing consumer outreach and soliciting consumer complaints, reviewing insurance policy forms to ensure they describe proper coverage, and performing compliance audits on all of Pennsylvania's major health insurers.

In order to enhance consumer awareness and understanding, the PID published new, comprehensive guidance aimed to help consumers understand what mental health and substance use disorder benefits they are entitled to under law based on the type of health insurance they have and to provide them with information on who to call if they experience issues with this coverage.

Teresa received the Ambassador for Recovery Award at the 2016 Recovery Walk in Philadelphia in recognition of her leadership on parity enforcement. This award is organized and presented by the Pennsylvania Recovery Organization-Achieving Community Together (PRO-ACT) and The Council of Southeast Pennsylvania.

While CHIP was still under PID, Teresa ensured children and teens had access to comprehensive substance use disorder treatment by ensuring all CHIP plans complied with Act 106 requirements.

Working with the federal government, Teresa had direct oversight of implementation of parity for the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, working to make sure parity was effectively implemented across the country.

In Oregon, Teresa fought for state adoption of parity, and represented drug and alcohol treatment providers, disability providers, and social workers.

## **BACKGROUND**

Prior to coming to Pennsylvania, Miller served as acting director of the State Exchanges Group, the Oversight Group, and the Insurance Programs Group in the federal government's Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Before going to Washington, Miller served as the administrator of the Oregon Insurance Division.

Miller received her J.D. from Willamette University College of Law, and her B.A., magna cum laude, from Pacific Lutheran University.

Miller is a national leader on insurance issues that impact consumers. At the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), she chairs the Senior Issues Task Force and its Long Term Care Innovation Subgroup, which is examining the future of private solutions to long term care financing, with a focus on removing barriers to pursue concrete solutions that can pave the way for the private market to play a more meaningful role in financing the long term care needs of society. She is also on the Congressional Budget Office's panel of health advisers, offering input on the potential impact federal policies and proposed legislation may have on health care consumers.

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