

**From:** tom hartline <[tmhart@verizon.net](mailto:tmhart@verizon.net)>

**Date:** September 13, 2016 at 10:59:24 PM EDT

**To:** <[HSalera@pahouse.net](mailto:HSalera@pahouse.net)>, <[PHarkins@pahouse.net](mailto:PHarkins@pahouse.net)>, <[VDileo@pahouse.net](mailto:VDileo@pahouse.net)>

**Cc:** <[tmhart@verizon.net](mailto:tmhart@verizon.net)>

**Subject:** HB1082 Hearing

Haley,

Little late in getting you this, but can you please make sure my testimony will go on record for the house members?

My name is Tom Hartline,

Jake was my brother-in-law and best friend. He was my golf partner, but most importantly he was a Son a Son-in-law, Husband, brother, uncle and friend to so many!

On the morning of November 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 he gave his wife Tiffany a kiss on his way to work and was never able to return home. He was tragically injured that day at work and passed away from the injuries on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Jake and tiffany's new house that was in the process of being finished and will never have that touch of Jake's many talents! Even though he lives in spirit with all of us, there's not a day that goes by that this tragic accident has touched us in so many ways! No one is to take for granted just how precious life is and how tomorrow is never promised to anyone. But we come to realize holidays picnics, birthdays and every day life will never be the same.

Tragic accidents happen and we see them on TV and read about them daily. But accidents will happen and can be prevented...at home in the car, and at our workplace. Smoke alarms seatbelts, airbags safety shoes, safety glasses all things meant to keep us safe in many environments. Some I just mentioned are laws passed that we abide by to keep us safe. I myself work in the private sector as a General Manager of a large manufacturing company that is family owned in Erie Pa. The Health and safety of the employees throughout the whole company is unbelievable. We have in place for many years...weekly safety audits done by our own employees. Safety meetings held monthly with the director of Corporate safety. Continuous safety video's that are viewed by all employees. Lock out tag out training to make sure any equipment that is not working correctly cannot be used until it's fixed. Training... training.. and more training. Safety awards and a banquet are held for all employees who not only work safe but make sure we are all in a healthy and safe environment! As we all know the more safe we are and the more diligent we are in making sure no one gets hurt or badly injured is better for all!! Company insurance costs are lower, less amount of lost work days for employees and everyone goes home. Let's face it our employees are the most important asset to the success of the company! Why not give them everything we can and do to keep them safe!

The HB1082 that is written on Jake's behalf is being proposed for many reasons. 2 reasons come to my mind. First reason is the Erie metropolitan transit authority where Jake worked for 27 years was a very unsafe workplace. His tragic death could have and should have been avoidable if equipment that was found to be defective would have been marked properly and put out of commission until fixed. It would have been avoidable if they first of all had good equipment to do the job the mechanics are asked to do daily! It still upsets me when we found a text message that Jake had sent to one of his superiors minutes before the accident telling him he didn't feel comfortable with the trolley jack and he needed to find two 20 ton bottle jacks that were supposed to be in the garage to help stabilize the bus. Needless to say we were told later they couldn't find them, but new ones were purchased after this accident. I have talked to many of Jake's former co-workers who told me after the accident that they have constantly brought up the unsafe conditions of the garage. Powered ceiling vent fans that are not working for years allowing the bus fumes to stay inside. The mechanics were forced to open the garage doors just to get some proper ventilation....Oxygen tanks that were held by a bungee cord to the wall. Equipment

they said was broke and really shouldn't be used but were somehow rigged to be used. When asked why? they said because there is no safety oversight and it falls on deaf ears!

Understand this.....The EMTA just had an open house at the new garage which is part of a 60 million dollar expansion for the transit authority. All the while this new expansion was getting built OSHA oversaw all of the contracted employees working on this new expansion. Once the building was complete and the keys handed over to the EMTA director, OSHA was and is now out of any oversight on this building... forever!

OSHA...IS THE MAIN FEDERAL AGENCY CHARGED WITH THE ENFORCMENT OF SAFETY AND HEALTH LEGISLATION. IT IS AN AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ! How unbelievable is it that a Federal agency is not allowed to oversee the health and safety of its own public employees? Public school workers Fireman, Police, transit workers? Currently there are 22 states that have plans for government employees and 6 of those states that also cover both state and government. I'm asking for you to **please strongly consider** passing this bill which would now include the state of **Pennsylvania** to insure all public employees along with the current private sector employees the checks and balances of our health and safety needed for our loved ones to come home. I know a lot of you will frown on the cost that would be associated with HB1082 which brings me to reason 2.

As I stated above.... Life is so precious, tomorrow is never promised! It's not about cost...It's about a unsafe workplace which led to a tragic death of a loved one at 48 years old and losing someone who loved life to the fullest. The memories are all we have! So I ask you please pass HB1082 in memory of Jake Schwab.

Thank You!

I would also like to thank Rep Pat Harkins for all of his hard work and sponsoring this bill and his continued effort to keep our public workers safe, along with John Renwick president and business agent for the Amalgamated transit union ATU local 568

And of course my sister-in-law and Jake's wife Tiffany...Keep fighting girl.. we are so proud of you.