



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
JOHN FETTERMAN

May 14, 2021

Executive Director Andrea Lowery  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
State Museum Building  
300 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Director Lowery:

Thank you for your commitment to preservation and your stewardship of our commonwealth's history. Pennsylvania's historical treasures are our most valuable resources, particularly those objects that assist in the interpretation of our cultural heritage.

One such object has inspired this letter: the U.S. Brig Niagara, the state flagship at the maritime museum in Erie.

The USS Niagara is a popular outdoor floating exhibit for Erie, a destination that attracts tourists who want to see the magnificent relief flagship for Oliver Hazard Perry in the Battle of Lake Erie in the War of 1812.

We gather from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's recent announcement that intentions are to keep the tall ship off the water again this year because of the coronavirus.

While this bipartisan trio fully supports the measures taken to ensure safety at the height of the pandemic, we implore the PHMC to reconsider this decision, uncover the ship and let it set sail this year, for at least the purpose of being taken to shipyard for maintenance. It's our hope that PHMC will revise its stance and exercise some flexibility in this cause, given that this valuable resource has already been removed from serving its interpretive purposes over the last year.

Our offices are available to offer resources and collaboration in brainstorming ways for the ship to be sailed safely, within reasonable mitigation efforts, especially given our commonwealth's endorsement of the recent CDC decision to revise guidelines and remove the mask requirement for vaccinated people.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
OFFICE OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
JOHN FETTERMAN

Prior to the famous Battle of Lake Erie, Navy officer Perry predicted that he would win the battle that would indeed make him famous, saying, "If victory is to be gained, I will gain it."

Let us echo that optimistic sentiment and find a way to bring this ship back to her best and most visible use while balancing easily-sustained virus mitigation measures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Fetterman".

John Fetterman  
Lieutenant Governor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Laughlin".

Senator Dan Laughlin  
Senate District 49

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan A. Bizarro".

Representative Ryan A. Bizarro, Chairman  
House Democratic Policy Committee