



PRESS RELEASE

State College Spikes • St. Louis Cardinals Single-A Short Season Affiliate • www.statecollegespikes.com
For More Information, Contact Joe Putnam • 814-272-1687 • jputnam@statecollegespikes.com

For Immediate Release
January 16, 2020

NOW IS THE TIME TO #SAVEOURSPIKES

Find out how you can help support the Spikes at SaveOurSpikes.com

(STATE COLLEGE, PA) – Today, elected officials and Happy Valley community leaders joined the State College Spikes in unveiling the **#SaveOurSpikes** initiative at a press conference inside the Centre County Visitor Center. The initiative will focus on key ways that fans and community members can help combat a Major League Baseball (MLB) proposal under which the Spikes and 41 other Minor League Baseball (MiLB) clubs would lose affiliation following the 2020 season.

Pennsylvania State Senate Majority Leader **Jake Corman**, Pennsylvania Community & Economic Development Executive Deputy Secretary **Neil Weaver**, Chair of the Centre County Board of Commissioners **Michael Pipe**, The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau President & CEO **Fritz Smith**, Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County President & CEO **Vern Squier**, Executive Director of the Bellefonte Intervalley Chamber of Commerce **Gary Hoover**, and **Dave Bohner**, the grandfather of late Spikes bench coach **Josiah Viera**, were among the featured speakers at the event who pledged their support to the effort to **#SaveOurSpikes** and highlighted the importance of the Spikes to the Happy Valley community.

Statements of support were also delivered by **Ann Kaufman**, District Director for Congressman **Fred Keller** (PA-12) and by **Cindy Kunes**, Field Representative for Congressman **Glenn “GT” Thompson** (PA-15) on behalf of both Congressmen.

As part of the announcement, the Spikes also unveiled **SaveOurSpikes.com**, a one-stop online destination for fans to find out all of the ways to help support the fight to keep the Spikes on the MiLB roster for 2021 and beyond. **SaveOurSpikes.com** includes information on:

- How to get **#SaveOurSpikes** signage and promo items to display in your home, in your office and on your vehicle
- Writing to elected officials at the local, state and federal levels to strongly urge them to fight for the Spikes
- Packing the ballpark for 2020 Spikes home games by purchasing Season Ticket Memberships and other ticket plans to fit any budget
- Booking 2020 group and hospitality outings at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park
- Offers on commemorative merchandise fans can wear to support the Spikes and celebrate their 15th Season in Happy Valley
- Opportunities to partner with the Spikes as an official sponsor.

In addition, fans are encouraged to use the hashtag **#SaveOurSpikes** on social media to let the entire baseball world know how important the Spikes are in Happy Valley and beyond.

The Spikes also seek to enhance their already sizable presence in the Happy Valley community in 2020. Through charitable events at the Spikes’ home, Medlar Field at Lubrano Park, as well as monetary and in-kind donations, the franchise has helped give over \$5,000,000 back to the Central PA community since its inception in 2006, including over \$500,000 in 2019 alone.

The club’s joint commitment with Penn State to create an environmentally-friendly facility will continue in 2020 as well. Medlar Field at Lubrano Park was the first baseball stadium in the world to receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification at its completion. The certification, which is awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council, is a third-party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark for design, construction and operation of high-performance green buildings.



The Spikes also announced that to celebrate their 15th Season of Making Deer Friends, and in appreciation of those helping to **#SaveOurSpikes**, pricing on all Outfield Bleacher tickets for 2020 home games would revert to \$6, the price of those seats during the club's inaugural season. Selected games during the season will also feature specials that slice that price in half to \$3, as well as nights with \$1 bleacher seats for all fans.

The Spikes' 2020 schedule will feature 38 home games, starting with Opening Night on Thursday, June 18. With the help of our fans' input, the standard start times for home games from Monday through Saturday will move up a half-hour to 6:35 p.m. Additionally, the first four Sunday home games of the season on July 12, August 16, August 23 and August 30, will begin at 4:05 p.m., allowing fans to enjoy more matinee action at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park.

The 2020 slate will also feature a 12:05 p.m. game on Thursday, July 30, a 6:35 p.m. matchup on Sunday, September 6 for the next-to-last home game of the season, and a 12:05 p.m. Labor Day game to close the season Monday, September 7.

The next opportunity for Spikes fans to join together will be on Saturday, March 14, when the Spikes host **SpikesFest 2020** at the Penn State Indoor Multi-Sport Facility from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Admission is free for the 15th annual edition of this indoor carnival, with family-friendly activities designed to bring the summertime fun of a Spikes game indoors.

Statements from Elected Officials and Community Leaders

Spikes General Manager Scott Walker

"Since November, countless fans have been asking us how they can help support the Spikes and keep the fun and excitement going past the 2020 season. Now, they can go to SaveOurSpikes.com to show the baseball world how important the Spikes are to our Happy Valley community. Write letters to elected officials to urge their support, be here at the ballpark with ticket plans guaranteed to fit your budget, bring your group out to the ballpark, get your Spikes gear, partner with us to create high-visibility campaigns to highlight your brand, and make sure to display your **#SaveOurSpikes** promo items proudly. Together, we will show Major League Baseball how much the Spikes mean to our community and how valued our contributions are here in Happy Valley. Let's **#SaveOurSpikes** and create even more memories for fans in Happy Valley for years to come."

Congressman Fred Keller (PA-12), U.S. House of Representatives

"Baseball is not only America's pastime, but it is emblematic of the American dream. For decades, Minor League Baseball has been the conduit through which players hone their skills, test their merits, and pursue their dream of one day playing Major League Baseball.

"Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District is fortunate to be home to two minor league teams: the State College Spikes and the Williamsport Crosscutters. These franchises have been great community partners, providing our region with affordable entertainment while contributing to our local economies.

"Because of these teams, and their part in the fabric of our community, I became a founding member of the 'Save Minor League Baseball Task Force,' where I am committed to working with my colleagues to engage Major League Baseball in a constructive and positive way.

"As part of that work, I am an original co-sponsor of a resolution that expresses the sense of Congress that Major League Baseball should maintain the current minor league structure rather than proceed with its plan to eliminate 42 minor league clubs.

"We all must work in a way that ensures the continued viability of these teams and the family-friendly entertainment they provide. I look forward to fighting for the Spikes, the Crosscutters, and the perseverance of Minor League Baseball across America."

Congressman Glenn "GT" Thompson (PA-15), U.S. House of Representatives

"The State College Spikes are part of our community and part of the fabric of the Centre Region. The Spikes provide a great family-friendly venue, stimulate the region's economy, and support local charities. America's pastime should be accessible to all Americans, and any plan that would eliminate 42 Minor League teams would be a great loss here in Centre County and across the entire country. I've been happy to work with more than 100 members of Congress, from both parties, to ensure that MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred understands the great impact their decisions could have throughout the nation and will be meeting with representatives from MLB in my office today to further make the case for Minor League Baseball – especially the State College Spikes."

Pennsylvania State Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman

"The Spikes provide family-friendly and affordable recreational opportunities for our neighbors throughout the region. Attending Spikes games with my family has helped to instill my love of baseball with my kids. From providing a community meeting place or positively impacting the local economy, the Spikes are more than a baseball team, they are a true community partner."



Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf

“Pennsylvania’s professional baseball affiliates help provide affordable, family-friendly entertainment and improve the quality of life in each of their communities. The MLB’s antitrust exemption and exclusive control of local professional baseball operations unfortunately could make this decision life-or-death for these community teams. The MLB needs to do the right thing and recognize the value of community institutions like the State College Spikes that have been part of the league’s success.”

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro

“Pennsylvania’s Minor League Baseball teams are an invaluable resource to their community. Specifically, their initiatives and investment in children steers them away from crime or drug addiction. As the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I believe this community engagement leads to safer neighborhoods. I’m proud to stand with the State College Spikes, and I remain willing to work with Major League Baseball to keep our teams in Pennsylvania.”

Pennsylvania Community and Economic Development Executive Deputy Secretary Neil Weaver

“The Spikes have long displayed a commitment to the local community and its efforts to raise the profile of minor league baseball in Pennsylvania. The team is part of this area’s proud sports identity, and has been for nearly 15 years now, boosting the community and the local economy. Today we urge the MLB to reconsider its proposal for the Spikes and many other minor league teams across the country and in Pennsylvania.”

Pennsylvania State Representative for the 171st District Kerry Benninghoff

“It’s hard to even articulate what this team and this stadium mean to our community. We as a Commonwealth have invested in the Spikes, and in return, the Spikes family has invested millions back into our local community and into local causes. The Spikes have become a beloved, irreplaceable part of Happy Valley. Let’s stand together, like only Happy Valley can, to make sure they’re around for a long, long time.

“The legendary history of baseball is Americana at its best. Where else can you watch the sun go down and the stars come up during an exciting, but affordable outing with your family? The Spikes organization has been more than just a baseball team, they have opened their field to Little Leagues, civics clubs and many non-profit organizations to help raise awareness and desperately needed resources.

“You have my word that I will work, to the greatest of my ability, to save the Spikes so that generations yet to come will experience the magic of those late-night fireworks after a victorious 9 innings of America’s favorite pastime.”

Chair of the Centre County Board of Commissioners Michael Pipe

“The State College Spikes are an integral part of our Centre County community and we are proud to make the case that the Spikes are an organization that is well-positioned for future successes and investments.”

Former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell

“Over 15 years ago, Chuck Greenberg and Penn State University presented a unique vision for a shared baseball facility, one that would be a state-of-the-art home for a short-season affiliated Minor League Baseball club that came to be the State College Spikes and for the Penn State baseball program as well. Based on the plan presented to me and representations made by all parties involved I authored a release of \$14 million from the Commonwealth’s redevelopment capital assistance program for Medlar Field at Lubrano Park, a terrific concept that would serve the Happy Valley community in a multitude of ways. Put simply, this ballpark would never have been built, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania would never have contributed the financing, without the certainty that the facility would be home to an affiliated Minor League Baseball franchise. The plan only justified an expenditure of state funds at this level if there was a minor league professional baseball club as a significant user of the stadium. Without such participation, we would not have authorized that level of funding.

“The Spikes continue to make major contributions to the community both on and off the field, doing their part to make sure that this impressive facility provides affordable entertainment to fans in Happy Valley. It is a shame that a model minor league franchise such as the Spikes would ever be in danger of losing its affiliation with Major League Baseball, and I am proud to stand with my fellow Spikes fans and support the #SaveOurSpikes initiative. Together, we will show Major League Baseball how much the Spikes mean to us, and together we will #SaveOurSpikes.”



Former President Pro Tempore of the Pennsylvania State Senate Robert Jubelirer

“Nearly two decades ago, I was privileged to play a key role with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to make Medlar Field at Lubrano Park on the campus of Penn State University a reality. Chuck Greenberg and Penn State’s shared vision of providing baseball fans in Happy Valley with the chance to see future big leaguers make their dreams come true, along with an affordable night out for families seeking summertime entertainment, has provided fans with 15 seasons of lasting memories.

“It saddens me that Major League Baseball, which professes to want to grow the game in communities just like State College, now wants to deprive fans of the opportunity to see the young baseball stars of tomorrow while enjoying a one-of-a-kind family activity in our region. I am 100% behind the effort to #SaveOurSpikes, and encourage all of Happy Valley to join together to show the baseball world what having the Spikes means to us.”

The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau President & CEO Fritz Smith

“Dear friends, The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau is a proud partner and supporter of the campaign to keep affordable, entertaining, family friendly minor league baseball thriving in Happy Valley. As you probably are aware, the Spikes are one of 42 clubs that could potentially be eliminated under a Major League Baseball proposal. Today, representatives from the State College Spikes, along with community leaders, and local, state and federal officials, kicked off the #SaveOurSpikes campaign with a news conference/community rally at the Visitor Center. There are a number of ways you can assist the campaign and let the world know what the State College Spikes mean to our local community. Visit the campaign website - www.SaveOurSpikes.com - to learn more and get involved.

“The most significant way you can help to #SaveOurSpikes: pack the ballpark this summer.

“Filling the stadium for every home game will send a strong message to Major League Baseball that Happy Valley cares about preserving the tradition of quality minor league baseball in Centre County for years to come.”

Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County President & CEO Vern Squier

“Institutions such as the State College Spikes are an economic, social, and cultural benefit to our community. Diversity in leisure time offerings benefit not only our residents, but also make our community attractive to recruits for business, education, and healthcare. All said, the retention of the State College Spikes as an asset is of high importance. The Chamber of Business & Industry of Centre County (CBICC) is happy to collaborate with the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB) in a show of true support for our beloved Spikes.”

Executive Director of the Bellefonte Intervalley Chamber of Commerce Gary Hoover:

“The State College Spikes are a valuable community asset and provide high quality and affordable family entertainment. Having a local team encourages involvement in sports, and fitness activities. Minor League Baseball in State College benefits everyone.”

Dave Bohner, Grandfather of Spikes Honorary Bench Coach Josiah Viera

“I want you to know that the name Josiah Viera would have probably never been known in the world of baseball had it not been for a phone call inviting Josiah to a ball game at the State College Spikes. Little did we know the incredible journey that was ahead.

“There are not enough words I can say to thank the State College Spikes for the many wonderful memories created during Josiah’s time with the Spikes. From his very first game, through his time as the Spikes’ bench coach, and all the way until his number 10 jersey was retired by the Spikes at the 2019 Opening Day game celebrating his life, Josiah left a legacy that will live on at the State College Spikes. Our friends at the Spikes are and forever shall be our extended family, and we thank them for allowing us to be part of an incredible baseball franchise.

“May Josiah’s story continue to inspire and encourage those who will come to play baseball with the State College Spikes. Thank you also to all of the fans who Josiah loved to for supporting not only the State College Spikes, but all the teams of Minor League Baseball, and thank you for letting me share Josiah’s story.”

Media requesting additional information should contact Joe Putnam at jputnam@statecollegespikes.com.

--SPIKES--

