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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 31, 2011
TO: All House Members
FROM: Representative Todd Stephens
151st Legislative District
SUBJECT: Introduction of Legislation – Special Allowances (Department of Public Welfare)

TS

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation to bring much needed reforms to the special allowance program administered by the Department of Public Welfare.

Recently, the special allowance program garnered a great deal of attention for its susceptibility to fraud and abuse. Auditor General Jack Wagner's August 2009 audit of the program uncovered egregious instances of abuse due to a lack of accountability within the program.

This legislation will create accountability within the special allowance program, implement new limits on special allowances and ensure funds paid through the program are used for their intended purpose.

We all recognize the need to offer assistance to individuals during difficult times. To ensure we are maximizing the number of people we help we must eliminate waste, fraud and abuse in the special allowance program. This legislation will help provide accountability while furthering the goal of transitioning families and individuals from welfare to work.

This proposal is similar to House Bill 2080 of 2009 introduced by Rep. Mike Turzai. The following members were cosponsors of that bill:

SAYLOR, BAKER, BARRAR, BEAR, BENNINGHOFF, BEYER, BOBACK, BOYD,
BROOKS, CAUSER, CHRISTIANA, CLYMER, COX, CREIGHTON, CUTLER, DAY,
DELOZIER, DENLINGER, ELLIS, EVERETT, FAIRCHILD, FLECK, GABIG, GABLER,

GEIST, GILLESPIE, GINGRICH, GRELL, GROVE, HARHART, HARRIS, HELM, HESS, HICKERNELL, HUTCHINSON, KAUFFMAN, M. KELLER, KNOWLES, KRIEGER, MAJOR, MARSHALL, MARSICO, METCALFE, METZGAR, MILLARD, MILLER, MOUL, MURT, MUSTIO, OBERLANDER, O'NEILL, PAYNE, PEIFER, PHILLIPS, PICKETT, PYLE, QUIGLEY, RAPP, REED, REESE, ROAE, ROCK, SCHRODER, SONNEY, STERN, STEVENSON, SWANGER, TALLMAN AND VULAKOVICH

Anyone interested in cosponsoring this legislation should contact Lindsey Freidly at LFreidly@pahousegop.com or call (717) 260-6163