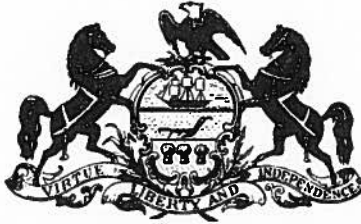


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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members
FROM: Representative Frank Farry
DATE: February 22, 2011
SUBJECT: Cosponsorship of Legislation – Carbon Monoxide Detectors

As of January 2010, the Pennsylvania building code requires all newly constructed homes and certain existing homes that have fossil fuel burning heaters or appliances and/or an attached garage to install a carbon monoxide detector. These requirements are similar to code requirements for smoke detectors. In the near future, I intend to introduce legislation that will require homeowners, upon the sale of their home, to ensure that the home is equipped with a carbon monoxide detector. This requirement will apply only to homes and apartments that have fossil fuel burning heaters or appliances and/or an attached garage. Apartments will be required to install an alarm following the effective date of the Act. To date, 33 states, including most of our neighboring states, have similar requirements.

Exposure to carbon monoxide is a major problem in Pennsylvania. According to a 2007 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Pennsylvania leads the nation in fatalities as a result of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of accidental poison deaths in the nation. It is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas that kills about 500 people and sends more than 20,000 to emergency rooms annually, according to the CDC. The combined medical cost of carbon monoxide accidents, lost productivity and lost wages is estimated to be \$8.8 billion a year. Equipping every home with two carbon monoxide alarms would cut that cost by 93 percent.

The good news is that most carbon monoxide-related fatalities and poisonings can be prevented through the simple use of a carbon monoxide alarm. An alarm is the only safe way to detect this silent killer. Carbon monoxide alarms are relatively inexpensive. You can purchase one for as little as \$20, and they typically have a useful life of 7 years.

If you would like to cosponsor this important legislation, please contact Dawn Pelletier at 260-6140 or via email at dpelleti@pahousegop.com.