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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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MEMORANDUM

To: All Members of the House of Representatives

From: Representative Ted Harhai

Date: April 13, 2011

Subject: Co-sponsorship: Peace Orders

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation that would allow victims of abuse, harassment, threats of violence, or other violent crimes to petition for a "Peace Order," giving them protections similar to those of a Protection From Abuse (PFA) Order.

Currently, in Pennsylvania, victims can only seek protection from those who terrorize, harm or abuse them under the Protection From Abuse Act if the victim and abuser are family members, live in the same household or were intimate partners. In order to remedy this inequity, my legislation will allow victims of certain enumerated offenses, including, but not limited to, rape, assault and stalking, whose abuser does not meet the required relationship nexus, to enjoy the same protections afforded to those whose abusers meet the relationship requirements necessary to obtain a PFA order.

I am introducing this legislation on behalf of Sarah Pesi, a young woman from my district. Sarah, a member of Mon Valley Youth and Government, introduced similar legislation, for which she won several awards at an event here in Harrisburg. Sarah initially introduced this legislation because she has been a victim of stalking and sought protection under the law with no success. Due to her situation, Sarah has had to alter her life style and forfeit activities that she once enjoyed. It is imperative that we establish protections for individuals like Sarah who live in fear due to threats of violence from others.

This legislation has the potential to save countless lives while allowing victims to feel safe in their own homes, schools and places of employment. If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Elisa Klee in my Harrisburg office at 717-772-2820 or at EKlee@pahouse.net.