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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Ronald G. Waters

SUBJECT: Request for Co-Sponsorship

DATE: March 5, 2012

In the near future, I plan to introduce a resolution mandating youth violence as a public health epidemic. The resolution will also establish universal statewide trauma-informed education. Youth violence plagues the Commonwealth as youth are committing acts of violence against one another and throughout their communities. As high school dropout rates and school violence increase action should be taken to remedy these mounding issues.

Youth violence detrimentally impacts youth and the communities in which they reside. Due to the exposure of violence youth must experience, they often suffer from either primary or secondary trauma. Primary trauma is trauma associated with the violent death of a loved one. Secondary trauma results from exposure to violence present within their community. In addition, exposure to violence in families, communities, and homicidal death can lead to youth-specific post traumatic stress disorder. Trauma cannot easily be detected in children requiring proper assessment.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), violence affects communities by reducing productivity, decreasing property values, and disrupting social services. Due to the amount of violence youth are currently exposed to measures should be taken to properly assess the issue.

If you would like to join me in co-sponsoring this resolution please contact Nilda Jenkins at (717) 772-6955 or via e-mail at njenkins@pahouse.net.