

RECEIVED APR 15 1993

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April 8, 1993

Thomas R. Caltagirone
State Representative, District 127

Dear Mr Caltagirone:

I am writing in response to an article published in the April 1st edition of the Pittsburgh Post Gazette. This article was about a bill that would make false charges of child abuse a crime. My family and I are very interested in assuring that this proposal becomes law as we have been victims of this misuse of the system.

Contrary to the example given in the Post Gazette, ours was not a child custody situation but a neighbor dispute about six inches of property. Without going into detail, multiple charges of abuse were filed against my family. To date, this issue has been unresolved despite many attempts made by the local police and our personal attorney.

It is my belief that part of the reason that this has not been resolved is that presently, there is no punishment for such a crime. Not only did my family, including my four year old daughter, have to relinquish our rights and endure a lengthy, private, and personal interview with a Children and Youth Services caseworker, we also had to suffer the anguish and anger of being victimized, yet have no way of justly resolving this matter.

I find the concern that this law will deter people from reporting abuse to be unfounded. If a person reports what they suspect to be child abuse in good faith and in order to protect a child, this new law and the current system would leave them unaffected, even if no abuse were found.

I cannot begin to tell you what hell my family and I have gone through because of this matter. Therefore, we are willing to provide any necessary support to assure that this proposal will be made into law and hope that you will assist in its passing.

Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,


Natalie Meyer