

The Honorable Thomas P. Caltagirone, Chair
House Judiciary Committee
106 Irvis Office Building
PO Box 202127
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2127

August 5, 2008

Re: House Bill 59

Dear Chairman Caltagirone:

I am currently employed by Fayette County Children and Youth Services and I am a member of the Board of Directors of Domestic Violence Services of Fayette County, Inc. I am writing to request that you submit this letter as testimony favoring House Bill 59. House Bill 59 will provide reliable funding for DVS services in Fayette County.

I have worked with children and families that are victims of domestic violence since 1988. Over the years I have seen tremendous funding cuts. Fayette County has always been creative in both obtaining funding and providing services to families and children. Fayette County has always worked for the benefit of victims sharing resources with all providers.

The need for services in Fayette County is very real I have seen an overall increase in the need for housing, counseling and over all services. In light of the current economic situation this can only increase. We know that financial stress contributes greatly to domestic violence.

HB 59 provides for a funding stream that is greatly needed in order to provide services to victims of domestic violence. At the current time the DVS Services is providing services every day to victims, their children and family members. With the increased funding these services could increase. The prevention efforts could grow in our county. For many victims and children there could be a light at the end of the tunnel, a future that until now they only dreamt.

It has become the goal of the Board of Directors to put ourselves out of business as a result of an end to the violence. This is one positive step in that direction.

I wish to thank-you for your time and support in this very important matter and your assistance in stopping the violence.

Sincerely yours,

Gina M. D'Auria
Casework Manager Fayette County Children and Youth Services
Board Member, Domestic Violence Service of Fayette County