



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

THOMAS
CALTAGIRONE

127TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



SUPPORTING THE CONCERNS OF TODAY'S WOMEN

JANUARY 2012

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Dear friend,

I hope this note finds you well.

Women's health and issues related to healthy living, access to affordable health care and the safety of children and our families are of greatest importance to me.

As the first year of the 2011-12 session has concluded, I wanted to update you on legislation being considered by the General Assembly as well as news related to women's health and available state programs that could be of service to you.

Please contact my office if you have a question about an item in the newsletter or if I can help you with any state-related matter.

Warmest regards,

Tom

Caltagirone supports new law to better protect Pa.'s children

Rep. Caltagirone has been working for years to close loopholes in Pennsylvania's laws relating to child predators. His most recent success is the passage of a new law that brings the Commonwealth into substantial compliance with the federal Adam Walsh Act.

In December, Gov. Tom Corbett signed S.B. 1183 into law. The new law closes several loopholes in Pennsylvania's Megan's Law related to homeless and out-of-state sex offenders. It also ensures that the state does not become a haven for sex offenders due to gaps in current law.

Additionally, the law will now allow better cooperation with other states to track the location of sex offenders by allowing Pennsylvania to tap into the national sex offender registry.

"This law keeps our citizens safe by requiring registration of sex offenders for longer periods of time, more frequently, and for additional offenses," said Caltagirone, Democratic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

"Failure to pass this law would have resulted in a loss of nearly \$2 million in federal money to the Commonwealth; money used to keep criminals off our streets and our citizens safe."

Under the law, Pennsylvania will adopt the comprehensive set of standards associated with the federal law, which is named for Adam Walsh who was abducted from a Florida shopping mall

in 1981 and later found murdered. The law increases the amount of information collected from each offender and requires Pennsylvania to include more information on its Megan's Law website.

Sexual offenders will be required to:

- report any change in address, phone number, email address, job and educational status;
- verify the name of any location they will be staying away from their permanent address seven days or longer; and
- provide advance notice of international travel at least 21 days before departure.

The mandatory registration time for sexual offenders will depend on the level of the offense. Those in Tier I must register for 15 years, Tier II, for 25 years and Tier III offenders must register for life.

Caltagirone said he is proud to be among the members who voted to pass this bill and get it signed into law.

About Megan's Law

Megan's Law requires each state to keep a database of people convicted of sex crimes so local officials know those sex offenders are located in their communities.

The law was named for 7-year-old Megan Kanka who was murdered in 1994 after she was raped by her
(Continued on next page)



Rep. Caltagirone looks on as Gov. Tom Corbett signs the bill making improvements to Megan's Law.

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neighbor, a twice-convicted pedophile. Megan's parents said they never would have let their daughter roam freely in the neighborhood if they had known a convicted sex offender lived nearby.

Pennsylvania's database is at www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us. You can find out if any registered sex offenders live in your county, municipality, city or ZIP code. The database also is searchable by name or alias.

HEALTHYWOMAN PROGRAM

The HealthyWoman Program is a free breast and cervical cancer early detection program of the Pennsylvania Department of Health. It is funded through a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Free services for those meeting the eligibility guidelines include:

- Clinical breast examination
- Mammogram
- Pelvic examination and Pap smear
- Education on breast self-exam
- Follow-up diagnostic care for an abnormal result

To find out if you are eligible, call 1-800-215-7494 or visit www.health.state.pa.us/womenshealth.

Caylee's Law legislation

This past summer, the media was filled with news coverage of the Casey Anthony trial. Anthony was tried and acquitted in the murder of her 2-year-old daughter Caylee. Prosecutors said Anthony killed her daughter, but the defense claimed she drowned in a swimming pool and no one reported it.

"The Casey Anthony case has generated a large amount of public interest because many do not feel that justice was served," Caltagirone said. "Several pieces of legislation have been introduced and are before the House Judiciary Committee in the hopes the measures would ensure that a situation similar to how Caylee's disappearance was handled never happens in Pennsylvania."

House Bill 1858 would make it a third-degree felony to conceal the death of a child.

Currently in Pennsylvania it is a first-degree misdemeanor for a parent to conceal the death of a child in the event of a still birth. Essentially, this bill would enact a "Caylee's Law" in Pennsylvania.

A HEALTHIER YOU

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States and claims more women's lives than men's. It is estimated that one in 14 women between ages 45 and 64 have heart disease.

High blood pressure, high cholesterol level, a poor diet, little to no exercise, smoking, stress and family history are all risk factors that can lead to heart disease.

There are things you can do to get or stay heart healthy. A healthy diet can significantly lower your risk of heart disease and other serious health conditions. Federal health agencies have released the following dietary guidelines designed to lower your risk of heart disease:

- Choose a variety of foods which include whole grains and fruits and vegetables.
- Limit the amount of fat consumption, choosing a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol.
- Consume sugar and sugary foods in moderation.
- Cook and prepare foods with low amounts of salt.
- Limit alcoholic beverages.
- Find a balance between the amount of food you eat and your level of exercise.

You can find more healthy living tips on the Department of Health's website: www.health.state.pa.us



HELP FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Every nine seconds a woman is assaulted or beaten in the United States and domestic violence is the leading cause of injuries to women. It causes more injuries than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined.

Domestic violence isn't always something you can prevent, but the cycle of violence can be broken. Be aware of some key signs of an abusive relationship:

- Your partner deliberately isolates you from your friends and family.
- You have been threatened physically and/or verbally.
- Your partner is physically violent to you.
- Your partner is emotionally abusive.
- Your partner has tried to hurt your children.

If you **or someone you know** is a victim of domestic violence, it's not your fault, and you're not alone. In our area, FREE and CONFIDENTIAL help is available from Berks Women In Crisis, www.berkswomenincrisis.org, (610) 372-9540.



Rep. Caltagirone meets with Mary Kay Bernosky, executive director of Berks Women In Crisis, to discuss legislation that is before the House Judiciary Committee.

Judiciary Committee seeks to protect Pennsylvanians

As Democratic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Rep. Caltagirone has an important role. The committee is one of the busiest in the General Assembly and is responsible for advancing legislation related to the public safety and welfare of the Commonwealth's 12.7 million residents.

"Many of the bills the committee addresses deal with serious criminal justice issues in Pennsylvania," Caltagirone said. "They can range from improving Megan's Law (see page 1) and other crimes where children are targeted, to identity theft and Internet crime, which can destroy a person's financial security. All are important in the protection of Pennsylvanians of all ages."

The following is a listing of a handful of measures the committee has reported out since January 2011:

House Bill 235 would require specified establishments to post certain information regarding the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline. The legislation would also provide a civil penalty for violations.

House Bill 601 would establish a mandatory minimum 13-year prison sentence for offenders who commit third-degree murder against a victim who is younger than 13.

House Bill 1156 would protect Pennsylvania consumers from identity theft scams known as "phishing." The bill would make it a crime for a person or entity to misrepresent itself as a legitimate business in email or on the Internet in an attempt to solicit private financial or personal information from consumers and steal from the victim. Under the bill, "phishers" could be found guilty of a second-degree felony, sentenced to up to 10 years in prison and fined up to \$25,000. They could also be subject to civil damages.

House Bill 1264 would allow expert testimony in sexual offense cases on the dynamics of sexual violence and how post-traumatic stress disorder may affect a victim's response in order to help a jury better understand a victim's actions following the assault. The bill is an attempt to address a

common misconception that an assault did not occur if a victim does not immediately seek help from law enforcement or medical personnel following the assault.

House Bill 2016 would establish the trafficking of a minor as a first-degree felony; establish that a parent selling or transferring custody of a minor for commercial sex purposes would be a first-degree felony; and establish a civil cause of action for coercion into prostitution.

Senate Bill 815 would require Pennsylvania courts to appoint legal counsel for any child appearing without one at any hearing and establish that counsel for the child cannot be waived.

Senate Bill 817 would require that restraints be removed from a child during a juvenile court hearing, with enumerated exceptions, and require that the child be afforded an opportunity to be heard on the question of restraint.

Senate Bill 818 would require juvenile court judges to state on the record how an ordered disposition furthers the goals of the Juvenile Act. This measure is in response to the juvenile justice scandal in Luzerne County.

STAY INFORMED

Visit Caltagirone's Website and Sign Up for Email Alerts!

Visit Caltagirone's website at www.pahouse.com/ Caltagirone to stay up-to-date on legislative and community initiatives.

You can also stay up-to-date via Facebook (www.facebook.com/RepCaltagirone) or on Twitter (@RepCaltagirone).



Scan here with your smartphone's QR reader to get regular email updates!


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INSIDE:

- The HealthyWoman Program
- Judiciary Committee protecting Pennsylvanians
- Information on help for victims of domestic violence


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My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Problems with the Department of Public Welfare (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups

Any state-related concern!