

MEMORANDUM

To: All Members of the House of Representatives

From: Representative Chelsa Wagner

Date: December 28, 2010

Subject: Co-sponsorship: Legislation to provide funding for victims of domestic violence

Domestic violence programs provide a vital public service to this Commonwealth. Each day over two thousand Pennsylvanians receive services from one of Pennsylvania's 61 local domestic violence programs that include emergency or transitional housing, hotline calls, and non-residential services, such as counseling, legal advocacy, and children's programs. These confidential services are provided to anyone in need at no cost.

Sadly, the growing demand for domestic violence services has outpaced available funding, and the weak economy has produced a surge in both the frequency and severity of violence.

To address this situation, I plan to introduce a bill that would raise the fees on marriage licenses and divorce actions as contained in Titles 23 and 42 to provide funding for domestic violence prevention and control.

Specifically, the bill that I am introducing is estimated to raise over \$2.8 million per year for services to individuals in crisis as follows:

- Amend Title 23 to increase the fee on a marriage license (from \$3 to \$38) dedicated to funding domestic violence services - \$35 would be redirected to the Department of Public Welfare for domestic violence services.
- Amend Title 42 to impose a new \$25 domestic violence funding fee on divorce filings.

If you would like join me in co-sponsoring this important legislation, please contact John Detrick in my office at jdetrick@pahouse.net.