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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Scott Conklin

DATE: January 5, 2011

SUBJECT: **Co-sponsorship Legislation - Convicted Arsonist Registry**
Former House Bill 214 of 2009-2010

In the near future, I plan to re-introduce legislation to create a registry of convicted arsonists in the Commonwealth. This legislation would assist law enforcement in criminal investigations and prevent future offenses.

As you may be aware, the U.S. House Judiciary Committee approved the Managing Arson through Criminal History Act in 2007. This law establishes guidelines and incentives for states to establish criminal arsonist and criminal bomber registries and to require the Attorney General to establish a national criminal arsonist and criminal bomber registry program. My bill would create a statewide registry and require convicted arsonists to register their name, Social Security number, and contact information with local authorities. California, Montana, and Illinois have all enacted state laws to create these databases for enforcement departments.

The statistics are alarming. Arson was explicitly mentioned as a violent offense in Montana, and ultimately the state adopted a convicted arsonist registry. In 2000, the number of arsonists paroled in California was 173. Within one year of parole, 69 arsonists re-offended. Within two years of parole, 93 arsonists had re-offended (53.76%). This heightens concerns among law enforcement personnel, and therefore makes a registry imperative.

Please join me in co-sponsoring this legislation by contacting Suzanne Chadwick in my office at 787-9473 or schadwic@pahouse.net.