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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 6, 2011
SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of legislation – Teen Dating Violence

In the near future, I plan to reintroduce legislation (**House Bill 2026 of 2009-2010 Legislative Session**) that will amend the Public School Code of 1949 to provide for teen dating violence education. While Act 104 of the 2009-2010 Legislative Session provides for optional teen dating violence education in middle and high school classrooms throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, my bill would go further by making such educational programs mandatory in our schools as a means of protecting the youth of our state.

According to the United States Department of Justice Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Liz Claiborne, Inc., women ages 16 to 24 experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence. Teen girls face relationship violence three times more than adult women. In fact, one in five high school girls report being physically or sexually hurt by a dating partner, and one in three teens experience some kind of abuse in their romantic relationships. Shockingly, many teens think such behavior is normal, and the majority of parents of these teenagers are unaware of the abuse.

With this legislation, I intend to work towards addressing the problem of teen dating violence by providing for a teen dating violence educational program that is to be integrated into the educational curriculum of middle and high schools throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The legislation amends the Public School Code of 1949 to require school districts to develop a specific dating violence policy that includes a statement of district wide intolerance of dating violence. Furthermore, my legislation requires for the training of district faculty and administration in the basic principles of dating violence, as well as the warning signs of possible dating violence in teenagers.

If you would like to join me in sponsoring this important legislation, please contact Suzanne Chadwick at 717-787-9473 or via e-mail at schadwic@pahouse.net.