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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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February 7, 2011

MEMORANDUM

Subject: Proposed Legislation
Establishing Apostille Fees

To: All House Members

From: Representative Thomas P. Murt

As you may know, an apostille is the authentication of a document in order for it to be recognized by a foreign government. A certification has the same function as an apostille, but its appearance and places of use are different. Apostilles are most often associated with overseas adoption processes, but can also be required for international business transactions, foreign study, and dual citizenship documentation. Currently, the Department of State charges \$15 for each certification or apostille, but this fee is not statutorily established. Due to the large quantity of paperwork involved, this per-document fee often becomes a significant cost in the international adoption process.

I intend to introduce legislation that would amend the Administrative Code of 1929 to set in statute the current \$15 fee for each apostille or certification. The bill will also establish that the maximum total fee for the certification of all documents for a non-commercial purpose is \$30. I believe this will help to alleviate the burden that the cost of apostilles presents for individuals seeking to adopt internationally.

The bill also requires the Department of State to develop a uniform form to request document authentication. The form will include a space for the requester to indicate the purpose of the request to ensure that the maximum fee is imposed for non-commercial authentications only.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, kindly e-mail my secretary Amy Bossart at ABossart@pahousegop.com

TPM/ab