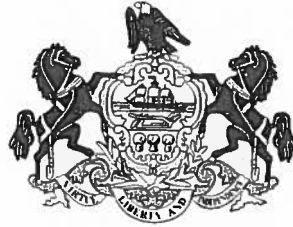


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House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

DUANE D. MILNE, PH.D.
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members

FROM: REPRESENTATIVE MARCY TOEPEL
REPRESENTATIVE DUANE MILNE

RE: Funeral Protest Legislation

DATE: February 28, 2011

As you are surely aware, the issue of protests at funerals became headline news once again in light of the shooting of Congresswoman Giffords in Arizona back in January. Families and loved ones, already dealing with the horrific tragedy of losing someone close to them, should not have to endure further grief and discomfort from those whom do not respect a funeral's place and role as time when individuals should be able to pay their last respects in peace.

This is why we believe that current law must be strengthened in order to protect the families and loved ones suffering through a grieving process. We will be offering a two bill package in order to accomplish this objective. Under current law, individuals commit a third degree misdemeanor¹ if they engage in demonstration activities within 500 feet of any cemetery, mortuary, church or other location being utilized for the purposes of a commemorative service within one hour prior to, during and one hour following the commemorative service.

The first bill in this package, introduced by Rep. Milne, will increase the distance that the demonstrators must remain from 500 feet to 1000 feet of any cemetery, mortuary, church or other location being utilized for the purposes of a commemorative service. The second bill in this package, introduced by Rep. Toepel, will change the grading of a violation of this statute from a third degree misdemeanor to a second degree misdemeanor².

We would welcome your partnership in advancing this legislation. Co-sponsorship opportunities are available by contacting Lori Losch at 787-8579 or via email llosch@pahousegop.com.

¹ A third degree misdemeanor is punishable by up to 1 year imprisonment and/or up to a \$2,500 fine.

² A second degree misdemeanor is punishable by up to 2 years imprisonment and/or up to a \$5,000 fine.