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MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members
From: Representative Mike Vereb
Date: March 3, 2011
Re: Proposed Legislation ~ Sexual Assault by Sports Official

In the near future I plan to introduce legislation to create the offense of Sexual Assault by Sports Official. The need for this legislation is illustrated by the case of William "Billy" Gordon, a private volleyball coach and personal trainer from Montgomery County who was arrested for having an unlawful sexual relationship with a 15 year-old girl that he had coached and mentored. According to the arrest affidavit, the victim would frequently visit the coach's home for physical conditioning training. The sexual assaults took place in the assailant's home and at a nearby park. The victim had known the assailant for about four years. *Attached is a copy of a newspaper article pertaining to this case.*

Parents entrust their children to the care of coaches and other athletic personnel serving sports teams which are part of recreational leagues and other organizations outside of the school environment. These organizations operate a variety of sports programs for children and include activities such as youth soccer, Little League baseball, and volleyball. My legislation targets sports officials, such as coaches, athletic trainers, team attendants, and managers by providing that it is unlawful for these individuals to engage in sexual intercourse, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse or indecent contact with a child under 18 years of age who is participating in the sports program.

The crime of Sexual Assault by Sports Official is modeled after the Institutional Sexual Assault statute, which makes it a felony of the third degree for an employee of a youth detention center to engage in sexual intercourse, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, or indecent contact with a child committed to the center. Just as with the Institutional Sexual Assault statute, the crime is graded as a felony of the third degree.

As the General Assembly did by creating the crime of Institutional Sexual Assault, I believe the General Assembly should create the crime of Sexual Assault by Sports Official.

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We trust the employees of youth development centers to help our children grow into competent adults. We also punish them severely when they break that trust by sexually victimizing children. The same should be true for coaches and others whose duty it is to guide children through organized sports.

If you would like to cosponsor this piece of legislation, please contact Julianne Naccarato of my office via phone 705-7164 or email jnaccara@pahousegop.com.