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Senate of Pennsylvania  
MIKE WAUGH  
SENATOR

MEMORANDUM

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MAJORITY CHAIRMAN

DATE: March 9, 2011  
TO: All Senators  
FROM: Senator Mike Waugh  
SUBJECT: Request to co-sponsor legislation  
*Creating a Certification for School Social Workers*

I am introducing legislation that will create a certification for social workers which will mirror the scope of practice outlined in their current licensure law, *Act 39 of 1987, the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act*. The legislation will define school social workers within *Act 14 of 1949 (Public School Code)*. This legislation does not include any mandate that school districts hire school social workers.

Social workers are currently employed in schools, but they must either hold a Home and School Visitor (HSV) certification (a truancy role) or be supervised by a person who holds this HSV certification. Unfortunately, school social workers are often required by their employers to violate their HSV certification to provide the services that a school district expects them to perform. Creating a new certification will ensure that social workers hired by school districts are able to perform all of the services required by the district that are included within their professional scope of practice.

In addition to protecting the school district from possible fines for violating the provisions related to employing a school social worker, creating a certification would ensure that school districts are able to better access federal resources. A school district that employs a licensed social worker to deliver social work services to a child with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) can have those services reimbursed with federal dollars.

The legislation would not require a mandate for any school district to hire social workers, and school districts that currently employ social workers under the HSV certification are already treated as