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To: All Senators

Date: May 5, 2011

From: Senator Michael J. Stack *MJS*

Subject: Co-Sponsorship

In the near future I plan to introduce legislation amending the Emergency and Law Enforcement Personnel Death Benefits Act (Act 101 of 1976), which provides for a one-time payment of death benefits to the surviving spouse, minor children, or parents of public employees, such as firefighters, law enforcement officers, and other emergency responders, killed in the performance of their duties.

My legislation would amend the law to add Natural Gas Responders who work for a city natural gas distribution operation, those employees who respond to a natural gas leak or threat of a natural gas leak, to the class of employees covered by this Act.

There has been much attention recently to the issue of the infrastructure of Pennsylvania's natural gas utilities as a result of the unfortunate accidents occurring in Philadelphia and Allentown. These two incidents, while not common, remind us of the dangers present when responding to reports of a natural gas leak. In the accident in Philadelphia, one employee was killed as a result of the explosion as work crews were responding to the leak and working to ensure the safety of individuals in the vicinity of the reported leak. My legislation would extend the same benefits available to other public sector employees involved in public safety to the natural gas responders that work for public utilities and who encounter the same risk in their jobs to protect the public.

I hope that you will join me in supporting these employees and cosponsor my legislation. If you would like to co-sponsor the legislation, please contact my office at 7-9608 or cschill@pasenate.com