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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 13, 2011

SUBJECT: TASK FORCE ON CHILD CARE HEALTH CONSULTANTS

TO: ALL HOUSE MEMBERS

FROM: REPRESENTATIVE LOUISE WILLIAMS BISHOP 

I plan to introduce legislation directing the Department of Public Welfare to assemble a task force to study the feasibility of developing a network of child care health consultants to provide assistance to child day-care facilities.

Although 360,000 children are in some form of child care in Pennsylvania, few child day care facilities have access to a health care professional to guide them in dealing with health and safety needs of children in their care. Research shows that good health contributes to a child's readiness to learn. It is widely known that children who are not physically healthy are more likely to have difficulty learning due to frequent absences, illnesses and distractions.

Under the bill, the Department of Public Welfare will convene a task force composed of 9 members with expertise in child day care or child health care, including staff from DPW and the Department of Health. The task force will issue a report to the Governor and General Assembly within 9 months after being convened that will describe existing programs, pertinent laws, benefits of child care health consultants, other states with such programs, qualifications of child care health consultants, possible costs, and recommendations.

The PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics has been instrumental in the development of the bill and fully supports this legislation.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this bill, please contact Heather in my office at 783-2192 or hwalsh@pahouse.net as soon as possible.