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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All House Members

**FROM:** The Honorable Vanessa Lowery Brown 

**DATE:** September 22, 2011

**RE:** Co-Sponsorship of Legislation – Intergenerational Family Care Act

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When we return to session next week, I plan to introduce legislation that establishes a pilot program to provide aid to grandparents who are the primary caregivers of their grandchildren. My legislation will be a companion bill to Senator Williams' S.B. 119 P.N. 97 introduced in the Senate earlier this legislative session.

Specifically, my legislation will require the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) to assist a limited number of pilot program participants with rental housing assistance, daycare assistance, access to social service professionals, and childcare and custody education. Further, DPW will provide limited assistance to non-profit organizations whose sole purpose is to expand the supply of intergenerational housing.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, over 164,000 children in the Commonwealth are living in households headed by grandparents or other relatives and over 80,000 grandparents in Pennsylvania are responsible for meeting the basic needs of their grandchildren. Many of the constituents that I have spoken with report that there is a complete lack of awareness of any financial resources and/or public assistance that may be available to them. Unfortunately, many grandparent caregivers live on fixed incomes consisting merely of a social security check. As a result, most of these grandparents cannot afford to care for their grandchildren and, consequently, many of these children end up in foster care.

It is with these concerns in mind that both Senator Williams and I strongly believe that as Pennsylvania's aging population continues to bear the responsibility of raising a growing percentage of our youth, we must take proactive steps to ensure the viability of both constituencies. To that end, if you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Takesha Latham in my office at (717) 783-3822 or via email at Tlatham@pahouse.net.