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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

October 5, 2011

To: **All Members of the House of Representatives**

From: **Representative Bill Kortz** *BK*

Subject: **National Family Caregiver Month**

In the near future, I will be introducing a resolution proclaiming November 2011 as "National Family Caregiver Month."

According to a 2009 survey conducted by the National Alliance for Caregiving in collaboration with AARP, the value of free services provided by family caregivers is approximately \$450 billion a year. For Pennsylvania itself, that figure was \$20 billion.

Approximately, 66% of family care givers are women. More than one-third have children or grandchildren under 18 years of age living with them. Indeed, the profile of the typical caregiver is that of a 49 year-old woman, married as well as employed, caring for her 69 year-old widowed mother who does not live with her.

The same survey found that are almost 17 million care for special needs children under the age of 18. Further, 78% of adults living in the community who are in need of long-term care are dependent on family and friends for assistance. Caregivers reported that the stress of their efforts negatively impacts their health, increasing their own chances of developing a chronic disease. Their mental well-being is also compromised with 40 to 70% having significant symptoms of depression with a quarter to half meeting the diagnostic criteria for major depression. By designating November 2011 as "National Family Caregiver Month," my resolution honors the sacrifices of those Pennsylvanians caring for family members and friends.

If you would like to co-sponsor this resolution, please contact Stephanie Jackson at 787-8175 (6528) or SJackson@pahouse.net.