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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** All House Members

**FROM:** Representative Todd Stephens

**DATE:** November 10, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Failure to Report Child Abuse and Associated Statutes of Limitations and Penalties

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In the near future I will introduce legislation expanding the list of those required to report suspected child abuse, increasing the penalties for failing to do so and lengthening the statute of limitations for prosecuting those who fail to report child abuse.

Currently, only those individuals who encounter suspected child abuse as a part of their employment are required to report it to law enforcement. I believe we all have an obligation to protect children if we suspect they are being abused. As such, my legislation will require anyone who suspects a child is being abused to report it to law enforcement.

Additionally, the current penalty for failing to report suspected child abuse is a Misdemeanor of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree for a first violation and a Misdemeanor of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree for a subsequent violation. My legislation would increase the grading to that of the conduct observed if the observed conduct constituted a Felony of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree or higher and to a Misdemeanor of the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree in all other cases.

Last, while the legislature has increased the statute of limitations over the years for sex crimes committed against children, failing to report these crimes has not been increased accordingly. My legislation will ensure the statute of limitations for failing to report abuse is consistent with the statute of limitations in place for other crimes committed against children.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation please contact my secretary, Lindsey Freidly, at [LFreidly@pahousegop.com](mailto:LFreidly@pahousegop.com) or call her at (717) 260-6163.