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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

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Memorandum

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Brandon Neuman

DATE: May 25, 2012

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of Legislation – Children and Youth Inspections

In the near future, I will be introducing the first of several planned reforms pertaining to children and youth services. Specifically, this bill will amend Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to allow county children and youth caseworkers to check-up on a child or the child's family for a period of time not exceeding two years after the family is accepted for general protective services or child protective services.

Children are our most valuable assets and should be protected by whatever means necessary. Unfortunately, all too often children are the victims of abuse and neglect that have lasting implications for the rest of their lives. Currently, county children and youth agencies are required to investigate all alleged cases of abuse or neglect and determine whether or not to accept the child for services. According to the child's risk assessment, an appropriate course of action is undertaken until the agency is reasonably assured the child is no longer in danger of abuse or neglect. The rationale behind closing a case must be documented in the child's case record.

My legislation will allow a county children and youth agency to conduct unannounced inspections of a child's living situation for a period of time of up to two years, regardless of the child's risk assessment. In other words, my bill will enable case workers to visit a child even after the risk of abuse or neglect is determined to be low or nonexistent if the child had been previously accepted for services. I believe this probation-type period will keep families and caregivers on their toes and maintain a healthy living environment for the child or children involved.

It is my sincere hope that you will join me in this important effort. If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Holly Stimely in my Harrisburg office at 717-783-4834 or hstimely@pahouse.net.