

**TARAH TOOHIL, Member**  
**116<sup>th</sup> Legislative District**

P.O. Box 202116  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2116  
Phone: (717) 260-6136  
Fax: (717) 772-8418

1 West Broad Street, Suite 100  
Hazleton, PA 18201  
Phone: (570) 453-1344  
Fax: (570) 459-3946

toohil@pahousegop.com  
www.RepToohil.com



**House of Representatives**  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

Deputy Majority Whip

Health Committee  
Judiciary Committee  
Subcommittee on Crime & Corrections  
Local Government Committee  
Urban Affairs Committee  
Subcommittee on Cities - Third Class

Welfare Reform Policy Development Team  
Property Tax Policy Development Team  
Interstate Compact for Juveniles  
Pennsylvania State Council  
East Central Caucus  
Coal Caucus

**TO:** All Members of the General Assembly

**FROM:** Representative Tarah Toohil  
Representative Sid Michaels Kavulich

**DATE:** June 7, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Anti-Gang Legislation Package

In the near future, Representative Kavulich and I plan to introduce two bills to deter gang activity in Pennsylvania. Recently, there was a troubling event in Luzerne County where a 13-year old girl was abducted on her way home from school and savagely beaten in a local park. Local law enforcement determined that the horrifying incident was a gang related crime. The U.S. Department of Justice released a report that indicated that street gangs are becoming increasingly organized and entrenched in northeastern Pennsylvania communities. Pennsylvania is one of the few states that do not have a state law to specifically deter gang activity in our communities.

This legislative effort would support a bi-partisan community initiative called Operation Gang-Up established by Congressman Lou Barletta and State Senator John Yudichak.

1. The first bill we are introducing would amend Title 42 (Judiciary) to provide for sentence enhancements for crimes committed in association with a criminal street gang. The bill establishes sentence enhancements for crimes of violence, possession, and witness intimidation if the intent of the offense was knowingly committed for the purpose of benefiting or promoting the interests of criminal street gangs.

2. The second bill requires the Department of Education to establish an anti-gang counseling pilot program to provide assistance to participating schools. The program shall be designed to educate students, teachers, and parents on methods to discourage participation in criminal gangs. Law enforcement officials will be encouraged to participate in the pilot project.

If you wish to cosponsor either piece of legislation, please contact Jodi Marsico at [jmarsico@pahousegop.com](mailto:jmarsico@pahousegop.com). Thank you for your consideration.