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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members

FROM: Representative Stephen Barrar 

SUBJECT: Introduction of Legislation— Title 35: Emergency Management Code

DATE: July 16, 2012

In the very near future, I plan to introduce legislation that will both expand and update Title 35, our Emergency Management Code. As you may know, the General Assembly last updated Title 35 in 1996 as a result of the winter storm and flood disaster responses. Since 1996, there have been significant events and new changes at the federal level that necessitate updates to Title 35.

Three events, for example, include the 2007 Valentine's Day Winter Storm, Hurricane Katrina, and the attacks of September 11, 2001. Other events include the creation of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the creation of the Commonwealth's nine Regional Task Forces, and new federal guidelines and programs relating to all-hazard disasters.

In 2008, the House and Senate Emergency Preparedness Committees held a joint hearing to review draft legislation and receive testimony from interested stakeholders. Since this hearing, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency has worked with the stakeholders and county emergency management agencies to revise their proposed rewrite of Title 35. My legislation is a product of all the work by PEMA and the stakeholders, and I plan to have the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee hold public hearings around the Commonwealth in the near future on this legislation.

I believe it is important that we begin to move this legislation through the legislative process to bring to fruition the needed updates that are necessary for a more efficient and effective mechanism so that our Commonwealth and local agencies can effectively prepare and respond to all hazards, including both disasters and emergencies.

If you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Gina Buffington in my office at 783-3038 or email gbuffering@pahousegop.com.

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