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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Ronald Waters

DATE: August 3, 2012

SUBJECT: Co-Sponsorship Request – Assault Weapons Ban

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that will ban the possession, use, control, sale, transfer, or manufacture of an assault weapon within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Since the federal law prohibiting assault weapons lapsed in 2004, many states have considered legislation to ban assault weapons. According to the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, seven states have enacted laws banning assault weapons to varying degrees. They include: California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York. Other states have implemented partial bans or restrictions through law or regulation. In the wake of the tragic movie theatre massacre in Aurora, Colorado, there have been renewed efforts among the states, including Illinois, to enact similar bans to outlaw assault weapons.

Currently, Pennsylvania does not prohibit the sale or transfer of assault weapons. Once a Pennsylvania resident is deemed eligible to purchase a firearm, that individual is permitted to obtain any firearm of their choice, including highly powerful and dangerous assault weapons. My legislation would amend Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes by creating a new section, §6121.1 (Certain assault weapons prohibited), to prohibit the possession, use, control, sale, transfer, or manufacture of an assault weapon in the Commonwealth. However, this legislation does include exemptions for members of the United States Armed Forces, National Guard and law enforcement officers who are performing official duties or traveling to or from an authorized place of duty.

Sadly, gun violence continues to permeate cities and towns across America. The time to act is now. If you would like to co-sponsor this important legislation, which provides extended provisions to protect the residents of this Commonwealth from horrendous criminal acts, please contact Nilda Jenkins in my Harrisburg Office at 717-772-6955 or NJenkins@pahouse.net.