



From State Senator Richard Alloway II

Dear Friend:

It is vital for the General Assembly to work with the judiciary and law enforcement agencies to ensure that Pennsylvania's justice system protects our communities from crime. The General Assembly passed a number of laws relating to crime during the 2009-10 legislative session, and I have included information on several of these bills in this legislative update. As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have. Your input is always welcomed and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Senator Richard Alloway II

## Governor Vetoes Legislation That Would Expand Self-Defense Law

The General Assembly recently gave overwhelming bipartisan support to legislation that would expand Pennsylvania's self-defense law. I am deeply disappointed that Governor Rendell chose to veto this legislation and put the interests of criminals above those of law-abiding citizens.

House Bill 1926, which included language similar to a bill I introduced earlier this year, would expand the Castle Doctrine in Pennsylvania. Under current law, an individual has the right to defend

themselves against a criminal who enters their home. This legislation would have expanded the Castle Doctrine to an individual's car or any other place that individual has a legal right to be. The legislation would apply only in those cases where a criminal has made a forcible entry into an individual's home or vehicle or is attempting to do so. The individual must also have reason to believe that the intruder wishes to do serious bodily harm to the individual or other occupants or commit other felonies, such as burglary, theft or assault.

I am hopeful we can see this measure signed into law during the upcoming legislative session to protect individuals who act in self-defense.



## New Law Aids Prosecution of Sexual Abuse of Children

**D**uring the 2009-10 legislative session, I was pleased to support legislation that was signed into law to help prosecute predators who target children.

Act 69 of 2010 grants the Attorney General concurrent jurisdiction along with the local district attorney in cases of sexual abuse of children. The new law ensures that local prosecutors have access to

assistance and resources from the Attorney General's office in prosecuting child predators.

The new law also elevates the grading of the offense of corruption of minors from a misdemeanor to a felony if it is proven at trial that the corruption of the minor occurred during a course of conduct that violates the section of the Crimes Code relating to

the sexual abuse of children.

Crimes against children are some of the most heinous acts a criminal can commit, and we must do everything in our power to ensure that criminals who exploit children are punished to the fullest extent of the law. This new law gives the Attorney General and prosecutors the tools they need to help put dangerous predators behind bars.

## Other Legislation of Interest

In addition to these measures, the General Assembly enacted the following laws relating to crime and punishment:

- Act 30 of 2010 - Legislation that authorizes the establishment of problem-solving courts with specialized jurisdiction over certain cases.
- Act 39 of 2009 - Legislation that removes the right to bail for certain offenses that could result in a life sentence or where there are no other conditions that will reasonably protect public safety.
- Act 59 of 2010 - Legislation that establishes a drug redistribution plan for correctional facilities for prescription medications.
- Act 70 of 2010 - Legislation that established a statewide reporting and investigative system for suspected cases of abuse, abandonment, neglect or exploitation of the elderly and disabled.

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