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MEMO TO: Friends and Supporters of Child Victims' Act of New York

FROM: Assemblywoman Margaret M. Markey

SUBJECT: An Update and an Agenda for the Next Few Months

DATE: Thursday, July 9, 2009

A month ago, as the regular legislative session was drawing to a close, I expected to bring the Child Victims Act to the floor of the Assembly. Even before debate began, I had received personal pledges of support from more than a majority of the Assembly members needed to adopt the bill.

With the votes to pass the bill for the fourth time in the Assembly, the co-sponsors and our supporters were particularly excited this year because we it seemed all but certain it would come to the floor of the State Senate for the first time where we were optimistic it would be adopted and then go to the Governor for his signature.

With strong support from the leadership on the Senate side and a new, enthusiastic prime sponsor, Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson, we expected to bring the Child Victims Act forward in the Senate shortly after its adoption by the Assembly. As it turned out, those high hopes were temporarily derailed by the turmoil in that chamber.

Even with today's announcement it is unclear when the Senate will reconvene to do normal business, but I am hopeful that the Senators will consider the bill this year. Senior leadership in the Assembly continues to be committed to enactment of the Child Victims Act in 2009. If the Senate resumes postponed legislative activity over the coming months, I am hopeful the bill may also be on the agenda for a special session of the Assembly that could take place as early as mid-September.

Over the past few months, the Child Victims Act has been the subject of some of the most vile and scurrilous attacks. The bill has been attacked by self serving opponents using false and misleading arguments. They are committed to killing the legislation by whatever means they can. In the face of their high-priced lobbyists, an expensive marketing campaign and cynical

disinformation about the bill, we continue to have strong support in the Assembly. We also have strong and growing public support.

When the Child Victims Act becomes law it will be because of the tireless efforts of hundreds of supporters and advocates who are continuing to commit time and energy to bring about enactment of the bill into law. They have personally traveled to Albany to lobby legislators and met them in district offices. They have written letters, send emails, gathered signatures on petitions and postcards, and talked to reporters to explain why they support the bill and why they are helping to ensure that it becomes law.

More important, they are continuing their work. Over the coming months, these volunteers and advocates are working together to continue activities to inform the public and legislators about the justice the bill will provide and how it will protect children by unmasking pedophiles.

I hope you will get involved in one or another of these activities. They include:

- Reach out to Your Local Legislators: Lobbying their local Assemblymembers and Senators in their district offices over the coming week. If you're not sure who your local legislator is, please call my Albany office, 518-455-4755.
- Postcard Campaign to Express Public Support for the Bill: A postcard campaign is being organized in a dozen or more local communities throughout the state to help the general public to express its support for the Child Victims Act to their Assemblymembers and Senators. If you live in the New York City metropolitan area, the Capital Region, Syracuse, Rochester or elsewhere in New York State, your help is urgently needed. For more information on organizing a postcard campaign in your home community, contact Tim Echausse at 516-987-7089.
- Sign a Petition on Website: Posting of a website where supporters will be able to "sign" a petition supporting the Child Victims Act and have an individualized message forwarded to the leadership of the Assembly and Senate and their local legislator. Watch for news about the web address of this site within a few weeks and be prepared to forward it to everyone you know who feels strongly about enactment of the Child Victims Act.
- Special Events and Other Activities: Look for updates about other activities, press conferences and special events about the Child Victims Act including announcement of new supporters and advocates. Please contact Mike Armstrong at my District Office, 718-651-3185, if you have media questions or suggestions.

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