



## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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# **Executive Director Dierkers Praises Legislators For Shielding Domestic Violence Victims from Eviction**

*General Assembly approves bill negating “nuisance ordinance” provision*

Harrisburg, PA, Oct. 16, 2014 –Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence Executive Director Peg J. Dierkers today congratulated the General Assembly for approving legislation that will ensure domestic violence victims are not evicted from their residences for calling emergency services multiple times.

“We are grateful to the legislators and coalition partners, who stood up today to protect Pennsylvania families,” Dierkers said. “Passage of this important legislation was only possible because of the grassroots support. It is truly something to celebrate during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.”

PCADV was among many social service organizations that supported the bill, because it negates a controversial provision contained in “nuisance ordinances” enforced in more than three dozen Pennsylvania communities. The provision requires landlords to evict tenants who call 911 several times in a brief period, usually three times in 12 months.

Pittsburgh, Allentown, Lancaster, Harrisburg, Wilkes-Barre and York are among the 37

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Pennsylvania municipalities that have adopted nuisance ordinances.

Rep. Todd Stephens (R-Montgomery) sponsored the bill, in reaction to a case in Norristown. A woman, who was stabbed by an ex-partner, nearly bled to death, because she feared eviction if she called 911. She survived after a neighbor called for assistance.

Stephens' bill passed unanimously in the House in March, but had stalled in the Senate, because of attempts by senators to attach unrelated amendments. Those attempts ended Wednesday night when senators voted to consider only Stephens' bill.

Dierkers noted that if Rep. Stephens' bill had not passed in this legislative session, it would have died and legislators would have been required to start anew with the next session beginning in January.

“Nobody should ever be forced to choose between eviction and calling for help when they need it,” Dierkers said. “We applaud the legislators, who stood up today, for making sure that domestic violence victims in Pennsylvania didn’t have to wait months, or possibly years, or longer to be granted this basic human right.”

#### **About the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

Founded in 1976, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the oldest statewide domestic violence coalition in the nation. Each year it provides assistance to nearly 100,000 victims of domestic violence, through a network of 60 community-based programs serving all 67 counties in the commonwealth. PCADV also promotes public awareness of domestic violence-related issues through its PA SAYS NO MORE campaign, which it operates in partnership with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape. For more information, visit [www.pcadv.org](http://www.pcadv.org) or [www.pasaysnomore.com](http://www.pasaysnomore.com); or follow PCADV on Twitter @pcadvorg and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pennsylvania-Coalition-Against-Domestic-Violence/479697025386367>.

