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Senator Fasano Testimony for SB 174
Select Committee on Children
Thursday, February 5, 2009
10:00 AM in Room 2B of the LOB

Good morning Chairman Musto, Chairman Urban, Ranking Member Boucher, Ranking Member Hovey, and members of the Select Committee on Children, thank you for the opportunity to testify today concerning **SB 174, An Act Concerning Child Support Obligations After Parental Rights Are Terminated Due To Abuse Or Neglect.**

The termination of parental rights represents the court ordered severance of the legal relationship between the child and his/her parent. This termination results in the loss of any rights or responsibilities the parent has to that child. A parent who, either voluntary or involuntary, has their parental rights terminated by the courts therefore no longer has to pay child support. In cases when the termination of rights and responsibilities was caused by abuse or neglect, I do not believe this is fair to the remaining parent.

Children have the right to support, including the basic fundamentals such as food, clothing, medical care and adequate domicile. The public policy of child support is based on the belief that both parents are obligated to support their children, even when the children are not living with both biological parents. If one parent's rights are terminated, the remaining parent becomes the sole parent or guardian, and financially responsible for supporting the child.

SB 174 requires the parent whose parental rights were terminated due to abuse or neglect to continue the obligations of child support. Victims of these crimes should not be put in further financial risk by absolving the perpetrator from responsibility to financially support the child. Thank you again for the opportunity to voice my strong support for this important measure, and I urge its' passage.

Thank you.