

Testimony in favor of HB 6403, An Act Concerning Security Freezes on Children's Credit Reports

Representatives Lesser, Stallworth and Simanski  
Senators Leone, Crisco and Martin  
Distinguished members of the Banking Committee.

I am Representative Jason Rojas from the 9<sup>th</sup> assembly district and I thank you for providing my proposed bill HB 6403, An Act Concerning Security Freezes on Children's Credit Reports a public hearing.

We are all aware of the risks of identity theft in our online world where so many details of our lives are but a click away from being accessible to those would take advantage of such access for personal financial gain. Children are particularly vulnerable to identity theft as we generally do not associate access to credit with children and therefore are less vigilant about informing ourselves about any potential breaches of a child's personal information. The recent security breach at Anthem should give many parents pause as it's possible that sensitive information related to children has been compromised and could be used to open lines of credit in the name of their children and victims are being given but two years of credit monitoring when the potential risk will exist far beyond those two years. The legislation would allow parents to work with credit agencies to create a credit file for their children and then place a freeze on the credit file so that someone looking to access it would be denied from doing so. A recent study found that one in 10 kids has his or her identity stolen by the age of 18.

States that currently allow this are Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

In August 2012, the Federal Trade Commission released information on the risks and dangers of child identity theft. The sensitive and personal information of our children, which is typically collected, stored and used by schools, medical offices, and other organizations can be breached by identity thieves. With this information, identity thieves can apply for government benefits, create bank accounts and open credit lines, apply for loans or utility services, and even rent a place to live.

I hope that we can provide parents and guardians the tools they need to protect the financial interests of their children and I look forward to reviewing any other testimony that is submitted on the bill. Thanks you for the opportunity for the bill to have a hearing.