

C=Leg.
10g to Sol
6/13/08 - Ta
C: Dr John



COMMITTEES:

- BASIC EDUCATION -
- SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIR
- HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
- EDUCATION
- URBAN AFFAIRS
- NATIONAL BLACK CAUCUS OF STATE
- LEGISLATORS - CHAPLAIN
- FORMER MEMBER, BOARD OF TRUSTEES -
- LINCOLN UNIVERSITY
- PA LEG BLACK CAUCUS
- CHAIR
- COMMERCE

THADDEUS KIRKLAND, MEMBER
 29 EAST 5TH STREET
 CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA 19013
 PHONE: (610) 876-6420
 FAX: (610) 447-3004

320 IRVIS OFFICE BUILDING
 HOUSE BOX 202020
 HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2020
 PHONE: (717) 787-5881
 FAX: (717) 787-9074

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
 HARRISBURG

2654

June 12, 2008

The Honorable Dr. Calvin Johnson
 Secretary of Health
 Health and Welfare Building
 8th floor- West
 Harrisburg, PA 17108

Dear Secretary Johnson:

I am writing to you because I am alarmed by a proposed Department of Health regulation that will damage our ability to help people with untreated drug and alcohol addictions and set back our efforts to address the drug and alcohol problem in the state. With this in mind, I am writing for your help and request your sign-on to the attached letter.

The three leading statewide organizations involved with treatment of drug and alcohol problems in all of our communities are also deeply concerned and have asked the Department to withdraw regulations.

After extensive review and analysis, the Pennsylvania Recovery Organizations-Alliance, the Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators and the Drug Alcohol Service Providers Organization of Pennsylvania have all concluded that the Department of Health's Proposed Regulation No. 10-186 will weaken the confidentiality and protection of drug and alcohol patient records, allow payers and insurers to needlessly obtain sensitive and personal information and damage the critical trust relationship between client and counselor. The Department of Health's own Pennsylvania Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse has already voted three times to oppose this regulation.

Over 140 letters of opposition were received by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission including letters from many in recovery, lawyers, the American Civil Liberties Union, treatment programs and others.

We can't sit this fight out. Exposing sensitive information beyond the specifics of the illness invades the privacy of some of our most vulnerable citizens. We would not permit such violations of privacy of the employed or as Representative Louise Bishop states in her letter of opposition, "This type of intrusion into the privacy of the poor will create barriers to housing, healthcare and employment...."

Not only does this proposal violate the privacy of our most vulnerable citizens, but the widely reported breaches of security of health databases will create yet another impediment to re-employment and re-entry into society.

We have a serious drug and alcohol epidemic in this country. Let's not make getting help any more difficult than it already is.

RECEIVED
 2008 JUN 26 PM 2:14
 INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
 REVIEW COMMISSION

Please review the attached sign-on letter and contact my office if you are willing to join me in this fight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thaddeus Kirkland', written over a horizontal line.

State Representative Thaddeus Kirkland
Delaware County, 159th Legislative District

Cc: All PLBC Members
Deborah Beck, President of DASPOP