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

FROM: Assemblywoman Margaret M. Markey

SUBJECT: Update from Albany, Thursday, June 4, 2009

I am pleased to report that the Child Victims' Act will come to the floor next week for debate and a vote by the full membership of the Assembly. The bill has already been overwhelmingly adopted in three previous sessions and I am cautiously optimistic that we have the votes to pass it in the Assembly again next week and I look forward to its adoption by the Senate during this session.

A vigorous discussion about the bill has taken place over the past few months and there has been intensive lobbying of legislators. While the original bill equally applied to both the public and private sectors, many of my colleagues were concerned that its practical impact might unfairly limit access for public sector claims. Accordingly, I have agreed to an amendment that will explicitly suspend the "notice of claim" requirement for public sector claims in order to ensure that victims of abuse, wherever it occurred, will have recourse for the wrongs done against them.

Another amendment to the bill relates to the proposal to create a one-year "window" suspending the statute of limitations for older child sexual abuse claims. I am pleased that the greatest number of my colleagues agree with the principle of justice that is embodied in the "window," but they are concerned about its potential impact. To address those concerns, the bill has been amended to apply the "window" to those who are 53 years of age or younger at the time of the enactment of the law. While I am absolutely committed to the right of every victim to have full access to justice for their claims, the adoption of this bill this year is a critical first step that we must take.

My focus over the past five years has been to enact a law that provides justice for survivors of childhood sexual abuse and that will expose predators in order to protect children now and in the future. Enactment of this bill is just the first milestone in our fight for childhood sexual abuse victims and for our children. With this bill as law, I will continue to fight to expand the provisions of this legislation and push for further meaningful reforms.

This law will be a strong beginning of a fight that will continue and I want to thank you for all your efforts. I will keep you posted on the exact day the bill will be scheduled for a vote on the Assembly floor next week.