

**PUBLIC HEARING**

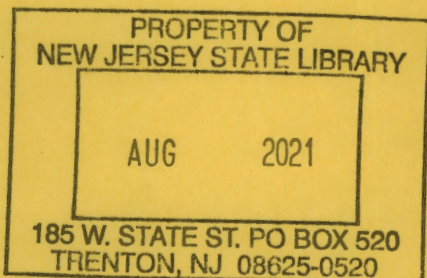
before

**ASSEMBLY CORRECTIONS, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

on

**ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 393**

(Designated the Child Life Protection Fund Act)



Held:  
February 29, 1984  
Passaic County Administration Building  
Paterson, New Jersey

**MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Richard F. Visotcky (Vice Chairman)  
Assemblyman Paul Cuprowski  
Assemblyman Nicholas R. Felice  
Assemblyman Garabed "Chuck" Haytaian

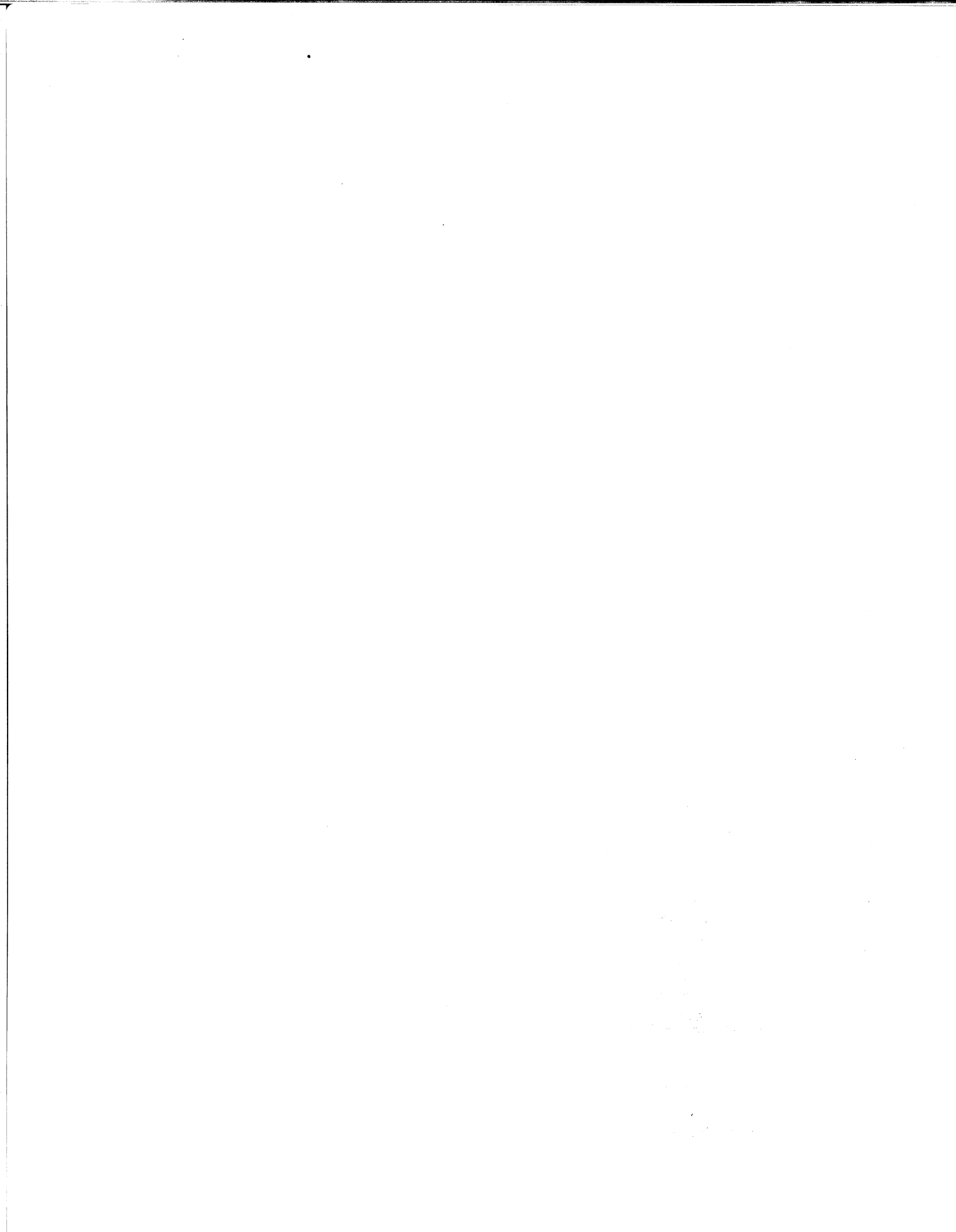
**ALSO PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Vincent "Ozzie" Pellecchia  
David Price, Research Associate  
Office of Legislative Services  
Aide, Assembly Corrections, Health and Human Services Committee

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**ASSEMBLY, No. 393**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1984 SESSION

By Assemblymen PELLECCCHIA, GIRGENTI, DOYLE, VISOTCKY,  
GALLO, GORMAN, SHUSTED, DORIA, CHARLES and  
DEVERIN

AN ACT to establish a Child Life Protection Fund and the Child Life  
Protection Commission.

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
2 *of New Jersey:*

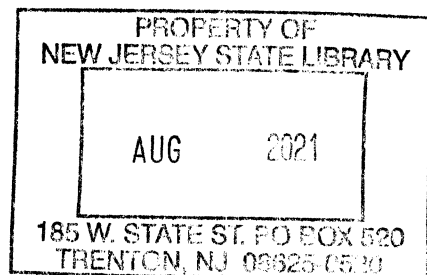
1 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Child Life  
2 Protection Fund Act."

1 2. There is established in the Department of the Treasury a  
2 special fund to be known as the "Child Life Protection Fund."  
3 Each taxpayer who is due a tax refund on his taxes paid pursuant  
4 to Title 54A of the New Jersey Statutes shall have the opportunity  
5 to indicate on his tax return that a portion of his tax refund  
6 be deposited in the special fund. The Director of the Division of  
7 Taxation in the Department of the Treasury shall provide each  
8 taxpayer with the opportunity to indicate his preference on the  
9 tax return in substantially the following manner:

10 Child Life Protection Fund: I wish to contribute \$2 , \$5 ,  
11 \$10  of my tax refund to this fund.

12 The State Treasurer shall deposit into the fund all moneys desig-  
13 nated for the fund pursuant to this act.

1 3. The Legislature shall annually appropriate all moneys de-  
2 posited in the "Child Life Protection Fund" established by this  
3 act to the Child Life Protection Commission to effectuate the pur-  
4 poses of sections 4 and 5 of this act.



1 4. a. There is established in, but not of, the Department of  
2 Human Services a Child Life Protection Commission. The com-  
3 mission shall consist of seven members, to be appointed as follows:  
4 one member shall be the Commissioner of the Department of  
5 Human Services, or his designated representative; two members  
6 shall be county prosecutors, appointed by the Attorney General;  
7 and four public members who shall be representatives of private  
8 organizations which provide services, or funding for services, to  
9 children in this State designed to identify, treat and prevent child  
10 abuse and neglect, and two of whom shall be appointed by the  
11 President of the Senate and two of whom shall be appointed by the  
12 Speaker of the General Assembly.

13 b. Members of the commission shall serve for terms of four years,  
14 except that the Commissioner of the Department of Human  
15 Services shall serve ex-officio, and except that the county prose-  
16 cutors shall serve at the pleasure of the Attorney General. Of the  
17 public members first appointed, two shall serve for a term of two  
18 years; and two shall serve for a term of four years.

19 Vacancies in the membership of the commission shall be filled in  
20 the same manner as the original appointment, but for the unexpired  
21 term. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation.

22 c. The commission shall select from among its public members  
23 a chairman and a vice-chairman.

24 d. The Department of Human Services shall provide the com-  
25 mission with such legal, stenographic, clerical and technical assist-  
26 ance as the commission may require in order to perform its duties  
27 under this act.

1 5. The Child Life Protection Commission shall receive, evaluate  
2 and approve applications of public and private agencies and  
3 organizations for grants from moneys annually appropriated from  
4 the "Child Life Protection Fund." Any portion of the moneys  
5 annually appropriated which are remaining at the end of a fiscal  
6 year shall lapse to the "Child Life Protection Fund."

7 Grants shall be awarded to public and private agencies for the  
8 purposes of planning and establishing or improving programs and  
9 services for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The com-  
10 mission shall in awarding grants establish such priorities respect-  
11 ing the programs or services to be funded and the amounts of  
12 funding to be provided as it deems appropriate, except that the  
13 commission shall place particular emphasis on community-based  
14 programs and services which are designed to develop and demon-  
15 strate strategies for the early identification, intervention and assist-  
16 ance of abused or neglected children, and their families.

17 The commission shall adopt such rules and regulations pursuant  
18 to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P. L. 1968, c. 410 (C.  
19 52:14B-1 et seq.) to govern the awarding of grants under this act  
20 as may be necessary to establish adequate reporting requirements  
21 on the use of grant funds by recipient agencies and organizations  
22 and to permit the commission to evaluate the programs and  
23 services for which grants are awarded.

1 6. The Child Life Protection Commission shall file annually,  
2 on or before April 1 of each year, with the Governor and the  
3 Legislature a report setting forth a description of the programs  
4 and services awarded grants in the previous calendar year under  
5 this act, which report shall set forth a statement of the priorities  
6 established by the commission in awarding those grants.

1 7. This act shall take effect immediately, but shall apply to  
2 the 1985 tax year and thereafter.

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#### STATEMENT

This bill permits the citizens of New Jersey to designate a portion of their gross income tax refund to be deposited in a Child Life Protection Fund to be used for programs and services for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The income tax check-off would be similar in form to that now provided for the Endangered and Nongame Species of Wildlife Conservation Fund.

The bill establishes a Child Life Protection Commission, consisting of the Commissioner of Human Services, two county prosecutors, and four representatives of private organizations active in the area of child abuse. The commission would use the moneys in the fund to award grants to public and private agencies and organizations for the purpose of planning and establishing or improving programs and services. The commission is directed to place particular emphasis on demonstration grants to community-based programs to develop innovative strategies for early identification, intervention and assistance of abused or neglected children and their families.

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**ASSEMBLYMAN RICHARD F. VISOTCKY (Vice Chairman):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am pleased to welcome all of you to the public hearing being conducted by the Assembly Corrections, Health, and Human Services Committee. My name is Richard Visotcky. I am Vice Chairman of this Committee. I will be chairing the proceedings here today.

Before we start, I want to take this opportunity to introduce the members of our Committee. On my left is Assemblyman Nick Felice. To my right is Assemblyman Paul Cuprowski. Chris Simon is from our Majority staff, and David Price is from Legislative Services. He does all the work for our Committee.

If you have any written testimony, or if you wish to be placed on our witness list, please contact our staff aide, Dave Price.

The purpose of this hearing is to consider Assembly Bill No. 393, the Child Life Protection Fund Act, sponsored by our good friend, and our good Assemblyman, Ozzie Pellecchia.

This bill will establish a State income tax checkoff system, which will be used to set up a Child Life Protection Fund as a way to finance child abuse prevention programs and services. This bill will also establish a Child Life Protection Commission, which would use the moneys in the fund to award grants to public and private agencies and organizations in order to plan, establish, or approve programs that serve to deal with child abuse and neglect.

We want to examine all aspects of this problem today as they relate to the legislation we are considering. I am certain we all agree that the obligation of government is to protect the vulnerable children in our society from various kinds of abuse, whether it be physical, abandonment, neglect, emotional trauma, sexual acts, or murder. It is one of our most important responsibilities as government officials and as citizens.

We are here today in support of that effort. The Committee hopes that the testimony presented today will provide a better perspective on the problems involved in this important policy area, to help us to better see all the dimensions of the subject. We look forward to hearing from everyone who has come to speak today. Anyone wishing to present testimony for the record may do so.

Our first witness, the sponsor of the bill, is Ozzie Pellecchia.

**A S S E M B L Y M A N V I N C E N T O. P E L L E C C H I A:**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I want to thank you for conducting this hearing in Paterson. I want to apologize. I had new glasses made last week, and my eyes are double focusing. So, until I get my new glasses, someone else has to do my reading. I have asked a good friend of mine, Conrad Vuocolo, to read my statement, so we will take it from there.

**C O N R A D V U O C O L O:** The statement of Assemblyman Vincent Pellecchia is as follows:

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, and members of the public, good morning. I would like to begin by welcoming each of you to the 35th District, and thanking you for making it possible to conduct these proceedings in the county that has taken the lead in this movement to help protect our children.

I initially introduced the Child Life Protection Fund Act in the last session of the Legislature, on June 11, 1983. The bill was prepared after I had held several discussions in my office with representatives of the Father English Community Center and various health and civic organizations in the area. Since that time, interest in this measure has grown extensively throughout the State, from both private and governmental sectors.

I would be remiss at this point if I were to fail to recognize the aid, assistance and dedication of the many individuals who have worked so hard on this. In particular, I would like to thank the group from the Father English Community Center, led by Conrad Vuocolo and Gail Manning, Commissioner George Albanese, Ed DeSantis, of the Passaic County Board of Social Services, and Marion Rauschenbach, Passaic County H.E.W. Chairperson.

In October of 1983, I was privileged to speak at a symposium at William Paterson College on Child Abuse Prevention. I was keenly aware of the problem when I introduced this bill. I was even more convinced of the importance and need of this legislation after attending the symposium. I am very proud of the leadership role that

the citizens of Passaic County have taken in the State of New Jersey in this critical matter.

You are going to hear today from many of the people who participated in that symposium, and I believe the information and statistics they will present to you will have a profound impact on each of you. This is a problem that claims no group in particular. It crosses all economic, ethnic and racial lines. It is a problem that has reached epidemic proportions. We have only concerned ourselves with the victims of abuse, and the time is long overdue that we begin to address the issue of prevention.

Assembly Bill No. 393 combines the best elements of the existing trust fund legislation throughout the country. It will provide an income tax refund checkoff as a source of revenue for a fund that will provide much needed dollars to organizations with child abuse prevention programs. It is completely voluntary and allows for maximum use of income dollars.

The bill calls for the administering of these funds by an autonomous board in which private organizations involved in this field will be in the majority. The board will establish priorities within the general charge of the legislation for policy and funding to support community-based prevention programs, along with oversight by the Departments of Health and Human Services.

There may be some questions addressed here today about the specifics of the establishment of this board. I want to assure the members of this Committee that I have no pride of authorship in this matter. My concern is the passage of this bill and its enactment into law, and the beginning of the end of our only responding to children after the fact.

The citizens of our State have generously responded in a similar fund, called the "Protect Our Wildlife Fund." Last year, the Department of Finance for the State of New Jersey indicated, with a similar checkoff system, that \$470,000 was contributed by the good citizens of the State of New Jersey for the Protect Our Wildlife Fund. So, consequently, all of us who worked closely with the legislation feel if our citizens responded that well for the protection of New

Jersey's wildlife, the same results -- if not better -- should be obtained from this legislation. Surely, we in New Jersey will respond with a resounding voice for the protection of our most important and valuable resource, our children.

The time to act is now. Our children are depending on it. We have in our power the ability to offer hope to hundreds, perhaps thousands, of our young people. But, if we can prevent the abuse of just one child, we will have served our constituency well. This is a problem that we must accept responsibility for, and do all in our power in order to assist those who are victims. But, more importantly, we must develop programs of prevention. Passage of this legislation will be a historic moment for the children of this State.

On behalf of the children of this State, I wish to thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Are there any other comments?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Other than the fact that the statement speaks for itself, I indicated that there is no pride of authorship on my part. I would be pleased to see if there is any way to improve the bill. As it stands right now, there are some concerns that you will probably hear during this hearing. One in particular deals with the funding: Where does the funding go, and how is it handled?

I am sure that George Albanese, Commissioner of the Department of Human Services, will be here to testify that he is in accord with this type of legislation. He is also concerned about how it is going to be administered, because, from my discussion with him, I got the feeling that as long as the State has an oversight on the money, he will be happy. What we ought to find out from this Committee, or from other people who will testify is, precisely how to use the money, who should handle it, and where it should be disbursed.

I think that is going to be the major issue. I think everyone in this room probably agrees with the intent of the bill. It is now just a question of semantics -- what we put into the bill.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you, Assemblyman. I would like you to join us up here at the Committee table, if you care to, as the sponsor of the bill.

Our next witness will be Assemblyman John Girgenti, from District 35. John?

I'm sorry; we have a latecomer. Assemblyman Haytaian is here with us also.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had to travel a little further than ten miles.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you for coming. John?

**A S S E M B L Y M A N J O H N A. G I R G E N T I:** Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I would also like to welcome you to Passaic County, to our County Administration Building. I am also proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation, which had its origin in Passaic County.

I commend Assemblyman Pellecchia, and those Passaic County citizens who realized a unique method to deal with the problem of child abuse in a highly positive way, through a mechanism called, "The Child Life Protection Fund."

As the main sponsor of legislation that is now law, which protects both the elderly from abuse, and the victims of crime, A-393 certainly appeals to me as being an innovative, effective way to deal with this problem.

Laws are often passed, devoted to, and focused on the deviate in our society. In some cases -- as in the case of crime victims -- we have literally bent over backwards to protect and rehabilitate the criminal, ignoring the victim. Only very recently, we are providing some very real assistance to the victim.

A-393 demonstrates an increased awareness and recognition that legislation regarding child abuse must seek to directly intervene to protect the helpless -- the potential victim -- before the fact.

It is this focus on prevention which will ultimately have the greatest impact on the overall incidence of child abuse. It is well known that parents who are abused often become the instrument of their own children's abuse. To attack this problem at its source through programs funded to decrease parental stress, provide counseling, and educate teachers to recognize potential victims, as examples, represents the optimum approach for the eventual elimination of the problem.

A further merit of A-393 is its innovative, decentralized method of disbursement of the funds, which involves private and public agency grants. As we are all well aware, communities, like individuals, are varied and complex. Local agencies who understand community problems will be infinitely more effective in defining their unique needs, and in providing and promoting child welfare.

I strongly urge your support for this legislation. Again, I commend Assemblyman Pellecchia for sponsoring it. And, I believe this is really a step in the right direction. This is a problem that has been here for many years. As I said before, we had a problem with the abuse of the elderly, and it was kept in the background. It finally came to light, and now there is something being done about it.

I think this problem is finally being addressed, and it is about time. We should move forward with it. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much, John. We have room up here if you care to join us.

ASSEMBLYMAN GIRGENTI: All right. I have to leave shortly, but I will stay for awhile.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: John, before you get up, I have one question. I intend to ask this question of most of the people who testify. Can you think of any way that we can disburse this money without going through the bureaucracy?

ASSEMBLYMAN GIRGENTI: Well, my feelings on that are -- I know there are mixed feelings on it here -- I think we have to work with the people who are working closely with the problem, the people who have to administer the program, because they are the people who will have to live with it. So, I would tend to favor the input of the people who are involved in this area on a daily basis -- the people who are on the local level and who are closest to the public.

So, I would weigh their input heavily in this type of a situation. I understand the problem. I know there may be two opinions involved here, but I feel when we consider legislation such as this, we, as legislators, are not experts in every field. We have to depend on the input from the sector of the populous that is most involved.

So, I would say those who are working closely with the people would be the ones I would like to see have the most say in this.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Through you, Mr. Chairman. On that basis, I think it is important to realize that for every case that is actually reported, there are probably nine that are not reported. And, it is important that every possible agency which can give input to a program, should have access to information, and should be able to convey it to this type of trust fund for the protection of our neglected and abused children.

Many teachers, in a school program, have the opportunity to notice these children -- especially those who may be in a one-on-one, emotionally-troubled, or special comprehensive program, that many of the schools throughout the State are running. We could rely on that kind of input. There are also people involved in recreational programs, and they have the opportunity to observe young people who have definite problems when they enter the program. I do not think we should leave anyone out, insofar as the established agencies are concerned, because their biggest handicap, to this date, has been the lack of input, due to the fact that many people feel they do not want to get involved.

Educational groups are trying to establish a way for incidents of obvious neglect and child abuse to be reported to the proper authorities.

So, I think it is important that we eliminate as much red tape as possible on this. We are on the right track, as we were with the senior adults who had been neglected and abused. I think we are opening up doors. Let's not make this a one-directional function. Let's utilize the people who are trained -- as you very aptly stated -- in their different fields. Let's let them take this information, analyze it, and get it to the proper source, without the red tape. I think that is very important.

ASSEMBLYMAN GIRGENTI: Mr. Chairman, if I may. I kind of look at things from my viewpoint as the Chairman of the Municipal Government Committee. I have always had the feeling that home rule and

input from people on the local level are important. I don't say we should close the door on anyone, obviously. There are times when we need input on State legislation from the municipal viewpoint.

But, I kind of look at things on the grass roots level. I want to make sure that people who are working with this on a daily basis -- whether it is with local government or with local agencies -- have the input they should have, because too many times we have had programs mandated from Trenton, or mandated from someone up above, and the people on the local level have not been able to contribute any input, or maybe they did not have the opportunity for input at the best possible level.

This is what I am trying to advocate. I know, of course, Nick, that we agree; we don't want to shut the door on anyone. We want input from everybody. This is an issue that we are finally addressing, as I pointed out. And, I commend Assemblyman Pellecchia for taking the lead on this. I will be more than happy to lend whatever support I can to this piece of legislation.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: What I meant, specifically, is that many of the county agencies, in a sense, are the liaison -- or the tunnel-through -- for programs from the State, and some of the earliest programs have been initiated and available through the county. I think the first step -- and many municipalities have done this -- is to work through county agencies before they have to go through the State, because they originated in the county. I think it is important for all the agencies that this continues also.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: John and Ozzie are both sponsor and prime cosponsor. I looked at the bill, and I think the bill is a good one. I only have one problem, and that is the fact that I don't think it is going to produce enough dollars through the checkoff. I don't really know through experience. That is an area I am not too familiar with.

How successful are these checkoffs on income tax returns?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Assemblyman, that is a good question. I think in my opening remarks I indicated that the Wildlife Fund picked up \$470,000 in one year.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: All right. How much money are we looking for?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: We will have to leave that to the good will of the people of the State of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: All right. But, in order to effectuate the work of the Commission and what we are trying to do here, how much money is going to be necessary?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: That's a figure we do not know, because we don't know exactly where we are going, or how the money is going to be disbursed until we get the money.

I see the Commissioner has just come in, and we are very pleased to see him. Certainly, there will be oversight from the Commissioner's office. However, the way the money will be handled will be decided after we see how much money we really have.

ASSEMBLYMAN GIRGENTI: Just to address that also -- and Ozzie really answered that -- basically what we are doing is, we are opening the door for this type of a program, which does not exist at the present time. So, our feelings are -- whatever level we reach -- at least we have started something, and if we can focus public attention on this type of a program by having it on their tax returns, this will bring it to the public's attention. As Ozzie said, the Wildlife Program has been a success. This, to me, has a stronger case in favor of it because it deals with child abuse.

Whatever we get is going to be a positive factor. I believe that if Wildlife can bring in so much, then if the groups that are involved in this, and if the people who are involved in this go out and do a job on behalf of it, and if the Commissioner -- I know he supports the legislation -- comes out and makes a strong play for it, we can build this fund up.

It has to start somewhere, as does any other program. You know, you start with seed money, and then you build it up. So, I think it is a step in the right direction.

I think Ozzie agrees that it is not a cure-all at this point. It is not a panacea for all the problems. It is not going to eradicate child abuse in one year. We can't put a time limit on it.

But, it is going to address the problem that is out there. We are finally dealing with it.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that we consider -- especially now, when we are going through appropriations -- some possible seed money in order to get this program underway, because it will be two years before we see any moneys that are donated through the taxpayers.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: If the Committee so wishes to amend the bill, I have no pride of authorship, as I said.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Mr. Chairman, on that very subject, and the question of raising dollars and how many dollars are going to be raised by this checkoff system-- First of all, let me congratulate Mr. Pelleccchia for sponsoring this bill. I think it is a step in the right direction -- a big step in the right direction.

Perhaps, since we are on the subject of checkoff, the Assemblyman may want to look at the possibility of also including a provision for those who do not necessarily receive a refund. Everyone in the State of New Jersey doesn't get a refund. Some people have to pay the State of New Jersey. Perhaps they might be interested in contributing two, five, or ten dollars -- whatever the case might be.

So, it seems to me that we might be limiting that provision for people who want to contribute, to only those who receive a refund. Perhaps we are overlooking those who have to pay the State of New Jersey, and who also may want to make a contribution.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Assemblyman, you make a good point. As I said before, we can open this any way we like, except that I don't want to jeopardize the bill. So, we will have to be careful when we are making amendments on this bill; we don't want to shut the door on the whole idea.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Very good. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: We are very fortunate to have with us this morning, our Commissioner of the Department of Human Services, George Albanese. Commissioner Albanese just left a meeting in Nutley to be here with us this morning, and we appreciate that very much.

Before you start, Mr. Pellecchia wants to make a comment about you. He wants to praise you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Well, I don't have to gild the lilly with my good friend, George. He has never once let Passaic County down, the 35th District in particular. Every time we have approached him, he was there. He has made a yeoman's effort on behalf of the citizens of Passaic County. George, I welcome you, and I am very pleased to have you here.

**COMMISSIONER GEORGE J. ALBANESE:** Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I really welcome the opportunity to be here to speak in support of the Child Life Protection Fund Act.

This Act provides a unique opportunity for public/private cooperation in protecting children.

Through tax checkoffs, our citizens have been able to contribute to such valuable efforts as Wild Life Preservation. This legislation gives New Jersey's citizens the same opportunity, through tax checkoff, to contribute to the future of our children.

It also sets up, for the first time in this State, a permanent funding source for child abuse prevention programs. This is a significant accomplishment and ensures continued support to our effort to stop child abuse before it starts.

I commend Assemblyman Pellecchia for sponsoring Assembly Bill No. 393, and I strongly support its purpose and goals.

This legislation is also very timely because it will raise public awareness. For too long, the tragedy of family violence, and particularly violence directed at children, has been kept in the shadows. Precious young lives have been ruined and sometimes lost.

In an attempt to describe the problem we face, it has been said that families today have become "the balance wheels or lightning rods for the stress and strains of everyday life settings, for the uninhibited discharge of feelings of hurt, insult, frustration, anger, and related violence." And, we are all painfully aware that violence which begins within the family, behind closed doors, often surfaces as society's problem.

However, I am pleased that today the plight of these children, and families, is being exposed in all its grim reality. This tragedy is being forced out of the shadows of the social service system. We are recognizing that family violence and child maltreatment have a great deal to do with all of us in every community.

Statistics reveal that in New Jersey one hundred thousand couples were involved in serious acts of violence last year, 1983. Over twenty-one thousand child abuse and neglect cases are referred to the Division of Youth and Family Services, and out of the twenty-one thousand each year, there are seven thousand where we find there is an incidence of child abuse. That adds to our case load of about thirty-five thousand in the Division of Youth and Family Services.

We know that these figures just represent the tip of the iceberg. Too often there is a reluctance to report this, or to interfere, if you will.

But, the numbers we know of are significant enough to tell us that we need a resource. We need to protect our families and our children who are in trouble. As one expert said: "We cannot wait to help a child in trouble. We must not allow the complexity of this problem to paralyze us."

We must do more than just acknowledge the problem of family violence. We must work towards preventing it by education, by support, and by community involvement. For we know that the effect of child abuse very seldom wears off as the abused child grows into adulthood. We must be concerned with the effect of today's battering and neglect upon tomorrow's adults.

I believe that in New Jersey we are moving to find new solutions to this problem. Over the past year, we have made significant strides in New Jersey.

We now have a nineteen member task force on child abuse, appointed by Governor Kean. We have a working group of prosecutors working across the State, looking at a new relationship with the social service system in dealing with the problems of child abuse. And, we are in the continuing process of reorganizing and streamlining the Division of Youth and Family Services.

Some of the changes we have made are: We have added to the Division, through the help of the Legislature -- the Joint Appropriations Committee -- four hundred new social workers -- new, trained social workers. We now have a statewide public awareness campaign. And, most important of all the things we are doing, we have changed the direction of the State of New Jersey from reactive to proactive. We are now talking about prevention.

This is the first year we have some dollars in the budget for prevention. We are also talking about using self-help groups and volunteers from the community to attack this problem.

But, government is just one part of the preventive process. We seek the help of the private sector, which has led the way in so many areas, and we encourage the participation of every citizen.

I propose that the majority of these funds be dedicated to prevention efforts, such as community awareness programs, voluntary recruitment efforts, parenting education, self-help groups, parent aids, and similar programs designed to halt abuse before it happens.

In closing, I would like to note that passage of this Act will be another important step in a difficult journey to increase societal awareness and to direct resources to planning and prevention efforts on behalf of children and families.

You can be assured of my total cooperation and participation in this effort.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you, Commissioner. I think this question came up before. You know, we are talking about this bill, which is a great bill. Everybody is in accord with it. Everybody is for it. I think Assemblyman Felice brought out the fact that we are talking about two years down the road for funding some of these preventive measures.

Is it possible -- and we know we are going into a budget break now for six weeks -- to have the Department of Human Services help put the seed money into the program this year, so that it will be a reality? Thereafter, it will be funded permanently through a checkoff system? We can't do that without your cooperation.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: You have my cooperation. Right now, we have \$2.7 million that was appropriated in the 1984 budget. That was the first dollar amount ever dedicated to prevention. That is what you would call "seed money."

We are asking for \$4.5 million for fiscal '85 for prevention, because we spent \$160 million in DYFS, and there are no dollars dedicated to the prevention effort. If we are ever going to really conquer the problem of human suffering, child abuse, and neglect, we have to put money up front, where it can be most effective.

So, you will have my one hundred percent cooperation in getting this program off the ground.

I have one comment I would like to make to the Committee. With relation to the question of the Commission, I would respectfully request that consideration be given to passing this funding through my Department, through the local advisory councils that have been set up in the various counties and communities in the State of New Jersey. We have a network now, which I think would be an opportune way to deal with local needs assessments, local priorities, and with what should be considered a community problem and a community response.

So, my suggestion might be that we can have an advisory council at the State level, but we ought to use the existing system that we set up in the last year, which has worked very well in the disbursement of funds. Then, the rules and regulations could be promulgated. We would probably need very little in start-up dollars if we use the existing network, which has worked very well, not only in Passaic, but also throughout the State of New Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Of the \$2.2 million you are asking for as an increase, how much of that would be used right in the communities, or the local areas?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: All of it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: All of it will be used?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: All of the money we are talking about for prevention, is going to be contract money that will go out into the communities for local agencies that are participating.

We recently announced, for example, a program in the City of Newark, which we think is very effective. It is the parent aid program. We have contracted with a group of churches for the parent aid program, which we feel is very effective.

But, I strongly believe, having come from county government, and from local government, that it is very difficult for one to sit in Trenton and determine the needs of Passaic County or Cape May County. We have to allow local decision-makers, who know the local problems and who know the local needs, to work with us in concert, and to attack the problem from their perspective.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: But, the question I am asking is, that is from the Department of Human Services, correct?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: That's correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: How will this bill then affect that two point some odd million dollars we are talking about -- the increase in the State budget?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: When it is enacted? When we actually get it to the tax checkoff?

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: No, prior to. We are talking about two odd million dollars right now, correct?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: Correct.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Would that money be money that would be put into the local communities?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Or, is it going to be spent by hiring more social workers, or something like that?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: No, local communities.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Then, from this bill the four hundred thousand, or the three hundred thousand, we would be getting as a checkoff, would be money that would be added--?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: (interrupting) To the local communities. Two point seven million this year, when you consider we spent one hundred and sixty million on the other end, on the reactive approach, is really almost insignificant. We need to put a lot more resources up front for prevention -- not only for child abuse and

neglect, but also we talk about mental retardation and other areas where we know we can have an effect. We have to turn the corner here and look at it from a different perspective. So, it is really going to be an add-on to the money we already have. I do not intend to put it into administration.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: We realize the magnitude of this bill, and we realize the magnitude of our children in the State of New Jersey. Do we really have to say we need a checkoff, or can we fund this? You know, this disturbs me in one respect because we are talking about two years away. We are talking about maybe two hundred, or maybe three hundred thousand dollars -- which is just the tip of the iceberg. That doesn't even scratch the surface.

I think we need the cooperation of the Department, to see where these moneys are going. We have had commissioners appointed here, and we are talking about another problem before we even start. I think this has to be done through the cooperation of this bill and your Department, in order to see that it is really functional.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I would agree with you. The three hundred thousand, considering the problem we have with child abuse, is scratching the surface.

But, the point is, the awareness it brings to the problem is significant. I, as a citizen, if I want to contribute to the future of our children, at least have an opportunity to do that. If we are doing it for Wildlife, which is a good cause, I certainly think children are higher on the priority list than Wildlife is.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Sure.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I think what Assemblyman Pellecchia has done here is important -- it has created an awareness. One of the things we learned in Passaic County, and through the efforts of the Passaic County people is, I attended a seminar up here to talk -- and, Ozzie, you were there at the seminar -- and we found there were an awful lot of people who were not aware of child abuse and neglect, nor the law and its implementation in the State of New Jersey.

To give you an example, as a result of that I went back to the State and I asked the Attorney General to convene a meeting with

prosecutors. We met with ten prosecutors throughout the State. And, believe it or not, we went from a prosecutor's office that had a full staff in Middlesex County, dedicated to child abuse and neglect, to another major urban county with not even one investigator dedicated to child abuse and neglect. They had no program at all. So, they developed what they now call, "The Working Group," and they have standards where each prosecutor participates in actually enforcing the law of the State of New Jersey on child abuse and neglect.

Here is a case where the law enforcement community was not really aware of its responsibility. The law enforcement community is now working with us in enforcing the law, because this is not only a social service problem, but it is also a problem that involves the legal system.

As I said, the significance here is that the words "child abuse" and "neglect" are going to be brought to the attention of the taxpayer. This is really becoming a monumental problem, given our changing family structure, not only in the State of New Jersey but nationally.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Pellecchia?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Yes. Just so I understand clearly where we are coming from, you made a statement that more or less indicated there would be an oversight on the fund as it comes in, and as it leaves your office.

Dick made a suggestion that the money should come from the General Fund. I think if it came from the General Fund, with all due respect to you, Mr. Chairman, it would lose sight of what we are trying to do. I would like to see as much money come in from the State as possible to that fund, but if we separate that money from the money that comes in through volunteer deductions, I think we would be losing complete sight of what we are trying to do.

While I said in the beginning that there would be no pride of authorship on my part, I would like to make sure it doesn't lose the intent of the original bill, as it was introduced.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I agree with both of you. I agree with Assemblyman Visotcky in the sense that the State of New Jersey

should, through the General Fund, give a commitment to children. We give an awful lot of commitment to many other things. We are dealing with prevention, and I will be asking for that money before the Joint Appropriations Committee, in order to expand prevention in the State of New Jersey. You have my word on that one. I feel very strongly that prevention is where we should be in the State of New Jersey.

On the other hand, I agree with you, Assemblyman Pellecchia, in terms of the need for awareness. What your bill does is, it really brings about that awareness. It is really scratching the surface for \$300,000, but it is going to bring the problem to the attention of the people of the State of New Jersey.

All those little steps in the process build toward a successful program.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Paul?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Commissioner, how are you doing? I just want to get a clarification on the terminology of "Advisory Councils." Are we talking about county-wide advisory councils throughout the State?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: We have today, in the State of New Jersey, twenty-one Human Services Advisory Councils that do needs' assessments, do plans, and actually determine the use of funds in the State of New Jersey as they relate to social services.

In some cases, when we are dealing with youth, there are some other organizations -- youth service councils -- that filter into the Human Services Advisory Councils.

For example, in planning the new Family Court, one of the requirements that I had was that although we had these new family court planning groups, they would have to pass their plans through the Human Services Advisory Council. It becomes a county-wide umbrella agency, so we really know we are meeting local needs.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Okay. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Haytaian?

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Through you, Mr. Chairman. Commissioner, as you well know, I served on the county level, as you did, and one of my prime tasks and purposes was in this area. I just

feel that we are not going to have enough dollars to do the job. Seed money is good, I agree with Ozzie. I also agree with the Chairman, that in order to solve the problem -- and that is what we would like to do -- we are not going to solve it in one year, because it has been a problem for many years. There are going to have to be dollars involved in order to solve the problem.

One of the areas I am concerned with is money. You had indicated that right now you have \$2.5 million, and you are asking for \$4.5 million, I believe. You are looking at the fact that dollars are going to be necessary.

One of the questions I have is, in your best judgment how many dollars are going to be necessary to really put a dent into this problem? That's a question I have asked myself over, and over, and over again. I don't want to put you on the spot, Commissioner, because I know if you say you need \$10 million, then we are going to ask you, "Why don't you put in for \$10 million?"

The problem here is that we can scratch the surface, and we can put a dent in it, but my feeling is, if we are going to solve a problem, I would like to solve it so that we can really bring down child abuse to a level that is never acceptable, but which may be a level we have to live with.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: Well, I was recently asked that question in another area. I will get back to child abuse and neglect, but we started a whole program on prevention of mental retardation. And, if any of you have ever been up to the North Jersey Developmental Center, in which we have the Meese Nursery, the money in that particular area will be significant and sufficient when we close that nursery. That would be my answer to that.

In the area of child abuse and neglect, I spent \$160 million reacting to the problem. We let it happen, and then we throw in all our resources, after the fact. That is probably one of the problems with government in general: We are always reacting. I would like to see that one hundred and sixty million dollars reduced at some point in time. I know that will probably be way beyond my term in office, or maybe it will be way beyond my lifetime. But, we have to start to put

some of our money up front, in terms of dealing with things we know can happen.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Well, that's what I wanted to hear. That's fine. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Felice?

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Mr. Chairman, I think Commissioner Albanese has hit it right on the head. Awareness is the one factor in any program that helps to make is successful. It wasn't too many years back that people were really not aware of retardation and mental situations and problems that can be corrected, and are corrected, to a great extent, today.

Yes, the money that would be coming in from the tax checkoff program is something to start with. But, as was brought up here today, rather than just have a checkoff, we should bring about an awareness that deductions and donations are accepted and they are tax free. Whether it be local civic and fraternal clubs, or State and national groups, there may be a desire on the part of these organizations to instigate and institute programs to help a particular cause, and awareness is worth much, much more than the initial dollars are in helping these organizations to get started.

I think the Commissioner is also aware of the fact that I had the bill for \$50 million for Human Services, to be used for programs such as this, mental retardation, and the homeless. This is the kind of thing that I think -- and I say this on a bipartisan basis, from both sides of the aisle -- concerns all of us. This Committee has been very concerned and active with relation to this.

I think you hit it right on the head, Commissioner, when you said awareness is the beginning.

Assemblyman Pellecchia, I also commend you. This may open up a lot of doors and a lot of coffers for more dollars, in more ways than we can figure out. I think that is important.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: Can I just make one other comment?

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: You sure can.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: You know, a whole other area that is developing in the State of New Jersey, and that is leading to problems

is the question of teenage pregnancy. You know, I think about how, in Passaic County, we might react to that problem of teenage pregnancy. That is a traumatic situation for a young woman with a child, and that leads, in many cases, into child abuse and neglect. Now, I would rather be in a position to provide money to the Father English Community Center and Gail Manning for a "crisis nursery," rather than deal with it after the fact. This would give that mother some time to think about what is going on and to put her life in order. But, we don't have those kinds of facilities, and what happens then is there is some kind of horrible child abuse situation, and we then react, put in all kinds of time, effort, foster care, and adoption services.

Those are the kinds of things that might take a heck of a lot of money, but some of those things can really be well worth it, when you are dealing with very young children. That is an example of the kind of thing we might want to talk about in terms of prevention and awareness.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: The question you brought up before -- it is in the bill -- was about the Commission. I think that is the intent of this legislation, to have this type of Commission on the tax checkoff. You spoke about the Advisory Commission that you have at the present time. Well, do you agree with the members of the Commission here? I think this is very important. That is really the crux of Mr. Pellecchia's bill -- part of it anyway. It is supposed to be a seven-member Committee.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I have no problem with a Commission, and the membership. My concern is whether it is advisory, or whether it is going to be another bureaucracy with administrative rule-making power. We have enough commitment to this cause now in the State, at the local level and at the State level. The prevention money can be given to these organizations, so they can use it for the appropriate purposes. We could form an advisory committee, to give us an overview and to have people from different areas on it. But, the mechanism that we can use is already in place. It is working now. It is working well. It is only in its first year. We could change it if necessary. But, that, to me, is somewhat of a duplication, in terms of the administration of the bill.

The Advisory Commission would be an awareness mechanism, but it wouldn't be another layer of government.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: But, I think the intent of this legislation -- again, this is my opinion -- is to see that this money is channeled through this group. Again, we are talking about awareness, and something entirely different than when we talk about what we have in our General Treasury. We are talking about something that can come up in Passaic County, Bergen County, or any county in the State of New Jersey.

The question is, we don't want to see the bill passed and then see it vetoed because of the Commission. I think the intent of all the members of this Committee is that we want to see the right thing done. And, I think Mr. Pellecchia would like to see this done. Again, many of these private groups really want to get involved in this. Who knows? We are talking about \$300,000. It may go to \$500,000, or to \$1 million -- who knows? You know, we hope it does.

We wouldn't want to see an eventual problem with your Department or with the Governor, who may say, "Well, look, I will conditionally veto the legislation providing it doesn't have the Commission." I am putting you on the spot, I realize that. If it is all right with you, Mr. Pellecchia, I think that is the intent of the legislation.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: I think that is perhaps right, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: We wouldn't want to see that happen, I am sure. Well, that is why we are having these hearings.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I believe it would be in the best interest of all concerned to make it an advisory body so we don't have to set up a rule-making authority, and we don't have to put expenses into the Commission. You have questions of the law, and the distribution of the money for child abuse through DYFS.

My strong emphasis is that it be done through citizen participation. I don't think you need another Commission to do that. I think we have already started that process in the State of New Jersey. Awareness is something we are all working on. We have a network out there, and it would be my personal position that the Commission would not be necessary.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: For argument sake, let's say we do raise "X" amount of dollars through the checkoff. Your Department is now spending \$2 million, or \$3 million, or \$4 million, or \$5 million -- whatever the case may be, and this Commission sees that we could use \$100 thousand, let's say, in Passaic County to see that this is really done right. Now, this is really separate money. It is from people who are contributing because they want to see things done. You see, that is the intent of this, to say, "Hey, we, the citizens of New Jersey, want to see that this is done 'in this respect,' as opposed to what the Administration is doing or what the Commissioner is doing." Maybe they want to see a little added something done for a particular county, or for a particular area -- maybe a lunch program, or something after school, I don't know.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: You are talking about \$300 thousand, and that is, as you said, just scratching the surfacte.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: It could be a little higher.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: It could be higher. The question is whether we, in this legislation, want to use this as demonstration money to test new ideas with.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I think you brought it out when you said awareness. I think that is a great word.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I am saying to you awareness, but it is how you use this money. If you spread this money across the State, it will have a significant impact. If you use it for demonstration programs to bring out awareness, it will have more of an impact. That is something you have to talk about in the actual implementation -- of what we are going to do with \$500,000. I think an advisory group would be significant in terms of giving us that kind of direction, as to where we are going to take the money.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I'm still asking you that question.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I think I answered it. My position is, I would prefer an advisory group that I assure you I would be responsive to. I do not think I would want to go against an advisory group of that caliber. But, I think if you look at the mechanics of it, which we began to look at, I think you are going to have a lot of

redundancy, and bureaucracy, and we are going to start to spend money on administration, as opposed to just getting money out through contract to those agencies that are performing in the community.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Paul?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Mr. Chairman, on that point, I don't think Mr. Pellecchia's bill should be overlooked in one crucial area: The members of the Commission shall be representatives of private organizations, which shall provide services, or funding for services, to children in this State, designated to identify, treat, and prevent child abuse and neglect.

I don't know how many members you have on your Advisory Council Board that would fit that category, if any. I don't know.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: We have several people on the Human Services Advisory Council. That is a whole other question -- you know, whether there would be any conflict in this kind of a situation. I really haven't given that much attention to the legal aspect of it.

I just think we have a mechanism in each county. We are looking to create a comprehensive county approach to dealing with the problem. It would be my opinion that we could work out the mechanism.

I would just like to pose a question to this Committee, which is very much involved in the issue we are talking about. I have been before this Committee on several occasions on all kinds of issues. I would like to know if this Committee would want me to come back with recommendations -- if that is what you want in the future -- for the implementation of this law, and to have yearly hearings on what this money will be used for. I respect the membership of this Committee, the oversight of this Committee, and the suggestions of this Committee, because I have gotten a lot of good suggestions from you in the past.

That is a mechanism in place. You represent the people. So, that would be no problem. I am just not looking toward creating another level of government that I think would be using some of the money in the wrong way.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Yes, but Commissioner, by the same token, sometimes if we get more people involved, we get things done. Sometimes we get things done.

Are you finished, Assemblyman?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: I have one last question, and then I think I will conclude my remarks to the Commissioner. You made some reference to the Statewide Public Awareness Campaign. I don't know exactly what that means. I wonder if that includes public service spots on television and radio, because if so, to be honest with you, I haven't heard of any.

I wonder if that also includes-- In other states I have heard and seen television spots where the local hospitals put on messages and make the public very aware. I just wonder if you are aware that this program includes those types of media coverage?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: The Awareness Program really kicked off about a week ago, with the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. And, we have representatives from just about all the areas you are talking about -- school systems, hospitals, etc.

For example, I will give you an idea of something we looked into. A couple of years ago kits were sent to every school system in order to educate the teachers on child abuse and neglect. We did a phone survey. We called some of the superintendents and the principals and asked, "Do you have the kits?" They said, "What kits?" They didn't even know about them. So, we are looking at it from a broad perspective.

Law enforcement is represented on this Task Force that I chair for the Governor. The Medical Society is represented and assists us on how we look at child abuse and neglect through our doctors, particularly the hospitals.

We have a broad array of people there that will be working on individual areas to develop this type of program. We are really in the embryonic stage of that awareness issue.

We, in the Department, have been talking about the issue of prevention. As I said, last year was the first year we had any money dedicated to that area. It is really in the embryonic stage.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Haytaian?

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Commissioner, one of the paragraphs in the bill indicates that -- I guess it is 4(d) on page 2 -- the Department of Human Services shall provide the Commission with such

legal, stenographic, clerical, and technical services as the Commission may require in order to perform its duties under this act.

So, in essence, I guess what the bill is saying is, you are pretty much going to have control, and you are pretty much going to spend the money. I guess the question here is, does this bill want to give you, and whatever administration is in office -- I think it should be indicated that way -- the whole power over what a commission may decide to do with the moneys that come in? I think that is really the question that is being asked. You know, the bill says you pretty much have control with everything else.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: Maybe I am missing something here. I really believe that-- You have twenty-one counties. And, you have people in the counties with Human Service Advisory Councils. You have Child Abuse Prevention Councils. One thing I recognized after taking this job was, I thought most of the counties were like Union County, where I come from. I have never been so shocked to find out differently. We have twenty-one very different counties, from Cape May to Bergen. I think that the decision-making should appropriately rest in the county structure that has been developed. And, the counties are doing a great job this year, in terms of disbursement of funds.

So, if we use a Commission for some general policy or guidelines, the real nuts and bolts people, the people who know what is going on in Passaic County can make the decisions as to how to use the money. I think the mechanism is there. All I am saying is, I think it should be an Advisory Council -- or an Advisory Commission.

I hate to see the positive points of this law being lost in a structural technicality. I think just having this hearing is significant. It is significant that we have a body, such as yours, giving attention to this important problem.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Well, you spoke about the Advisory Councils. I know there was a complete revamp last year. I am a member of the Warren County Advisory Council, and I go to their meetings. We had a complete revamp last year. So, in essence, it is in its infancy stage at this point.

Are you saying that they are looking at the child abuse problem as a priority-type item?

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I would say that, in reviewing the plans that have been developed, we have another whole area injected here, and that is the new Family Court, which deals with the family and the child. From my recollection, many of the Councils have donated money to that specific area, which relates to the area we are talking about. I really can't tell you specifically. Probably Ciro Scalera could tell you better than anybody -- looking from the outside in -- what the response has been per county, as opposed to me sitting in Trenton and trying to tell you that.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Commissioner, I think you said before in your statement that you originally had 21,000, and now you have as high as 35,000 cases of child abuse. Maybe with something like this, with another function and another group of people, you may find 60,000 cases of child abuse.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I hope not.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I hope you don't have any. Believe me, that is the intent of this. But, I am kind of hung up on that. It disturbs us to find this out, because we thought the intent of the legislation was-- In talking to the Department, we thought there wasn't going to be a problem with this.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: I assure you, you will not have any problem. I am just saying to you that I don't think it is the best way to approach it. I am definitely not going to block this piece of legislation. I am not going to withdraw my support of this legislation over a technicality. I want to assure you, that is my word on this piece of legislation. I just think -- having been in State government for two years, and having been in county government for over fifteen years -- there is a better way of doing it. But, if this body decides they would like to keep the bill the way it is, I will not object, because right now we are doing what we intended to do: We are bringing awareness to the problem of child abuse and neglect. We are going to generate a continuing source of revenue, which is so desperately needed, and no one in his right mind would oppose this.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Felice?

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: I think the main thrust of the hearing today is to gather information on the bill, and so forth. And, once it leaves this Committee and it gets to the different Houses of the Legislature, I think if there are any questions about legality, methods, or amendments, it will come about at that time.

I think we have yet to hear much information, and if we dwell too long on the legal aspect of an Advisory Commission, a Study Commission, or just a Commission, we are going to lose sight of what we are trying to accomplish here.

I just thought if there was no other legal problem here, the intent of the Commissioner -- and I guess everybody else here -- is to make sure that this becomes law. I just didn't want to go back and forth too much on whether it should be a Study Commission, an Advisory Commission, or a Commission. I thought maybe we could put that to rest and get on with some of the other testimony.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Are there any other questions? Mr. Girgenti?

ASSEMBLYMAN GIRGENTI: Not being a member of this Committee, but as a cosponsor of the bill, I want to commend the Commissioner for taking the time to come up here, because this is -- as we said -- an important issue. I think when you have the Legislature and the Administration working hand-in-hand, it is all the more productive for a piece of legislation such as this. I know the Commissioner has given his cooperation to Assemblyman Pellicchia on this bill.

I think what we are doing is to try and focus attention on the problem. From what I understand, the Commissioner has made a commitment to continue to focus attention on this problem, and to make more people aware of it.

That, basically, is our reason for this legislation, Rich. As was said, that \$300,000 is not going to cure the problem. We have to start somewhere, and it is about time that we begin to focus attention on this. As Nick Felice said, I don't think we should get too bogged down on the makeup of the Commission.

I just want to see a Commission that represents the private agencies. If that is what the Commissioner is saying, then that is great, because that is the input we need.

As I said before -- and I don't know if you were here at the time, Commissioner -- one of the things I have learned through my involvement with the Municipal Government Committee, is that mandates are given to the local level -- and legislators are just as responsible for this as administrators are, don't get me wrong -- and maybe the input was not there. Then, the people who have to deal with these mandates on the local level are faced with a real situation.

So, I want to see this become a grass roots type of approach, where we get the input from the people who have to deal with the problem on their level, on a firsthand basis. So, my visualization is not to see something come down from above, but to see something come from below, up. So, if that is the concept of this program, I think we should proceed with what is needed.

Again, I want to commend Commissioner Albanese for making the trip up here today to support this. I know he has been very supportive of the issue, as he has been very supportive in many areas of this State. So, I would like to commend him for this support.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Pellecchia, do you want to add something?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: No, I have nothing further, other than the fact that I knew this was where we were going to get tied down on this issue. We have had many discussions about it, and I think the best thing to do is to let this Committee go through whatever process they have to, in order to come up with solutions. If there are other people who wish to give input after that, I, again, will leave it open. Even if we have to amend it on the floor, we will still be working in one direction, to get a bill passed that will give the people of the State of New Jersey something new, something innovative, and something that will probably shed light on some of our problems.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much, Commissioner. Thank you for being here.

COMMISSIONER ALBANESE: Mr. Chairman, thank you for putting this type of hearing together. I think it is very important, and I really want to thank you personally.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: **C I R O S C A L E R A**.

**C I R O S C A L E R A**: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: You have written testimony?

MR. SCALERA: Yes, I have submitted a statement, although at this point I am not going to read it or go through it.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Okay. We would prefer anyone who has a statement to give it to our committee aide and it will go into the record. You can then give us a breakdown or a synopsis of the statement, please.

MR. SCALERA: That is what I would like to do. First of all, I have five basic points, and then I would like to focus on some of the questions and issues that have been raised.

The first point is that child abuse is a serious problem. We did a study last year and, in fact, found that the incidence and severity of this problem has been increasing. We confirmed that the basic system we have in place right now makes very little effort in the prevention area.

The second point is, it has been difficult over the years to get State departments, the Governor, or the Legislature to allocate funds for prevention. Too often the demands on the operating budgets of the Departments require that operational needs, which are primarily treatment oriented, get served -- and this has been at the expense of prevention.

To the credit of Commissioner Albanese and the Governor, this year, for the first time, we have begun to see money specifically targeted for prevention. We are very supportive of that, and we believe that is a positive step.

In terms of other states -- the third point I would like to make is that there are presently fourteen other states that are operating a fund similar to the one that is being proposed today. The experience in these states has shown this to be positive; it seems to be working well, from the information we have obtained.

There has been a report prepared that a later speaker, from the New Jersey Chapter of the International Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, will delve into in a little more depth, about what some of the other states' experiences have been. Their experiences have been positive to date.

Finally, in terms of my fourth point, my personal view is -- from looking at the system over the last six years -- it is clear that we have to make this shift. We have to begin to focus some of our dollars and energy on the preventive area if we are ever going to begin to address the problem.

There are really two basic things that have to be done. One is not before this Committee today, and that is to address the issue of poverty, and the fact that so many of our families are forced to grow up in poverty. We are taking other steps to pursue that issue.

The second important issue to pursue is that of prevention, and earmarking money for prevention.

In terms of some of the questions you have raised for consideration, I would like to respond to those questions. In terms of "How much money can we anticipate?," seven states -- in response to your questions, Assemblyman Haytaian -- presently have an income tax checkoff system. Alabama raises about \$100,000. Arizona raises about \$250,000. California raises approximately \$4 million. Illinois raises approximately \$450,000. Michigan, which is a state similar to New Jersey, raises approximately \$600,000 to \$700,000. So, that has been the experience so far in operating the checkoff system.

To go to some of the other questions the Committee has raised, in terms of putting a ceiling on the fund, we would be in favor of, and we would support putting a ceiling on the fund. A couple of other states have done that. They have essentially said that once the fund reached a certain level, a cap would be put on it, and the disbursement for the ongoing funding of the operations would come primarily from the principal.

Should other sources of contribution be allowed? We believe that they should. The fund should be allowed to get money from general State revenue, from the corporate sector, or from the private sector, as they may be inclined to provide it.

In terms of the issue the Committee spent some time on this morning -- the composition of the Commission and its role and authority -- I think there may be an area for a middle ground, if you will, between the position that the Commissioner put forth, and what is intended in the bill. I think those who read the bill-- In fact, the operating experience in many of the other states is that these Commissions are semi-autonomous in the sense that independent people are put on the Commission. There is usually a linkage, by housing it in, but not of, the Department of Human Services, and then by having the Commissioner as a member of that Commission.

Many of the people who have looked at it, have liked that concept. They liked the idea that decisions concerning the allocation of the funds would theoretically be based on criteria the Commission itself would develop. That would be a merit-based criteria, and it would be designed to promote not the same kind of thing we have been doing, but really innovative, demonstration, public awareness kinds of programs.

On the other hand, in New Jersey we do have the development of a county-based Human Services planning process that is likely to be with us for some time.

This Committee might want to explore a way to involve the County Human Services planning process with the process outlined in the bill. That is not to say that every possible proposal that would be submitted to the Statewide Committee would have to emanate from a County Human Services process, but I do think there should be some role and some involvement by the County Human Services Planning Committee in that process. It should not be the body that would decide policy exclusively. I think if the County Human Services process is involved, then there could be an objective review, by the Commission and the Commissioner, of all the recommendations that are emanating from the county and from independent groups within the county, and decisions could be made on that basis. So, that might be an area to explore. I think it should be explored, otherwise we could have some duplication.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Can you tell me why you recommended nine members instead of seven?

MR. SCALERA: Primarily to have a broader public input. Basically that was it: To allow for putting on more public members.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Which I agree with.

MR. SCALERA: That is the main reason for it.

Let's see, one other point--

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Can I ask you a question?

MR. SCALERA: Yes, sure.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: In your statement you say, "Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for direct costs associated with the position, including travel, child care expenses, etc." What does child care expenses mean?

MR. SCALERA: Those expenses are expenses that a volunteer -- and presumably the people who would serve on these committees are volunteers -- would incur for the care of their children while they are actually attending meetings.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I see. I was just curious.

MR. SCALERA: You might know it under the words "baby-sitting," but we put it in there as "child care". The reason I raise this is, there isn't a State Child Placement Review Board, and we are now in the process of getting the Child Placement Review Act amended, and that is language that is going to be added there. It has caused a problem with some of the volunteers. They did not have time to serve because of that particular situation.

On the question relating to the Commission and its function, I think you might also want to consider some language in the bill that would discuss the issue that the Commissioner raised, the issue of, "To what degree is the private sector going to be emphasized in the funding?" I think there certainly should not be an exclusion of public agencies from participating in this. But, you may want to consider putting some general guiding language in that area of the bill by saying that these services are primarily to be developed in the private sector, working together with the public agencies involved, designed to combat child abuse.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: That's in the bill.

MR. SCALERA: It says "community based programs," but it is not--

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: You can't put in every word that everybody wants. That would be impossible.

MR. SCALERA: That's true.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Are there any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Just one.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Mr. Haytaian?

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: The Chairman touched on the fact that you suggested an amendment, changing the numbers. Basically, you are changing it from seven to eleven members. That may really be an unwieldy Committee -- that many people. You are making a suggestion for nine public members, and then one member to be a county prosecutor and one member to be the Commissioner. That is a total of eleven members on this Committee. You then also indicate that they would not be reimbursed, but they would have travel and child care expenses. I don't quite understand the child care expenses. What expenses are we talking about here?

MR. SCALERA: Baby-sitting.

ASSEMBLYMAN HAYTAIAN: Oh, their expenses. I'm sorry. Okay. I think the suggestion is a good one, but there are too many members, in that the cost may go up. That's all, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Paul?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Just as a point of information, maybe you could tell me about the Association for Children of New Jersey. Exactly what is the structure and the setup of that particular organization?

MR. SCALERA: We are a statewide child advocacy group. We do not provide any direct services to children, but rather we serve to enunciate their needs on a statewide level. We are involved in doing research and legislative advocacy. We look at bills that are introduced in Trenton, and we take positions on the bills, trying to look at children's needs and interests. We do not receive any money from the Federal government or the State government. We are privately funded, so we feel that we can provide a relatively objective view of what is happening, statewide, to children.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Are there any further questions? (no response) Thank you very much, Mr. Scalera.

MR. SCALERA: Thank you, Assemblyman.

ASSIMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Gail Manning, Chairperson, Passaic County Child Abuse Prevention Council.

**G A I L M A N N I N G:** Could we have another chair, please?

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: We also have Edward DeSantis and Grace Gerusic accompanying Ms. Manning.

MS. MANNING: Good morning. Thank you for having us here. We represent the Passaic County Child Abuse Prevention Council, a direct outgrowth of the symposium mentioned here this morning by Commissioner Albanese and Assemblyman Pellecchia, which occurred in October of 1983.

As a representative of the Passaic County Child Abuse Prevention Council, I wish to express appreciation for this invitation to appear before you, the New Jersey State Assembly Committee on Corrections, Health, and Human Services.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Can I interrupt you for a second?

MS. MANNING: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Is that a prepared statement?

MS. MANNING: Yes, it is.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Is it before the Committee? Do we all have one?

MS. MANNING: Yes, you all have one.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I wish you would give us a synopsis of it, because it will be in the record automatically. I would prefer that.

MS. MANNING: I would like the statistics to be read into the record, though.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: They will be. They will be put in the record.

MS. MANNING: I would prefer to read it, if you don't mind. It is only a couple of pages long.

Your attention at these hearings to Assembly Bill 393, "An Act to establish a Child Life Protection Fund," introduced by Assemblyman Pellecchia, is commendable.

The Council I represent is made up of representatives of agencies within Passaic County from the areas of education, health, criminal justice, welfare, and other social service areas involved in the disturbing problem of child abuse which, in the minds of many, is becoming America's shame.

National statistics report that 1982 had 929,310 reports of child abuse, involving an estimated 1.4 million children. During that year, twenty-four states reported 484 fatalities due to child abuse. Estimates, however, for the entire nation bring that terrible figure closer to 1,000.

Here in New Jersey, in 1982, there were 20,193 reports of child abuse, with 19 fatalities. And, here in our own Passaic County, more than 4,000 cases of child abuse were reported since January of 1983.

The need for corrective action is apparent and overdue. The time for corrective action is now. Our Council was formed as the direct result of an appeal made by the Honorable George Albanese, Commissioner of the New Jersey State Department of Human Services, who spoke at a symposium sponsored by Passaic County Health, Education, and Welfare organizations at William Paterson College last year.

In his remarks, Commissioner Albanese called for "the involvement of citizens of good will, because assistance was needed at grass roots level, in the homes of people of all income brackets, of all races and religions, of all nationality groups and economic backgrounds."

While some statistics are cited, they are, of course, misleading. However, in reported situations the problem has increased 123% since 1976. Sexual abuse of children has increased 700% during the same period.

Statistics will also show that 65% of the child abuse reported involved White children, 22% Black, and 11% Hispanic, and that the average age of the victims is seven years of age, with almost an even division of male and female victims. Sixty-two percent of all child abuse cases are reported in the neglect category. Of this group, 61% of the abusers are female, because they are often the primary caretaker, while 39% are male.

The disturbing figures also indicate that in 95% of abuse, relatives have a parental relationship to the child.

Today, however, we are involved in the cause of child abuse prevention. We are of the opinion that the best way to reduce the statistics is to deny the commencement thereof. It is for this reason that we are pleased that Passaic County appears to be taking the leadership in our State, first with the symposium, where Assemblyman Pellecchia's bill was outlined, along with the National Child Survival Act, as reported at the symposium by the Honorable Robert A. Roe, our Congressman.

I am also obligated at this point to express the appreciation of the Council for the efforts of Mr. Conrad J. Vuocolo, who initially recommended this State legislation, which Mr. Pellecchia so compassionately and humanely repounded to without delay.

Our society responds often after the fact. Needed steps in public health situations do not take place until after an outbreak of a disease -- even traffic lights are not erected at busy school and business crossings until a number of fatalities and injuries occur.

It is for this reason that our group has accepted the challenge of Commissioner Albanese, to assist in the prevention of child abuse with the backing of Assemblyman Pellecchia's legislation, which would allow the concerned New Jersey taxpayers to donate part of their State income tax return to a fund for this cause.

Very honestly, the legislation we are discussing today was prompted by a brochure we saw today in a local library, which indicated that a fund of this type is now in effect in New Jersey to "Protect Wild Life."

Indeed, as we heard this morning, more than \$300,000 was donated by New Jersey taxpayers for the Wild Life cause. We are hopeful that with the successful passage of this legislation and its implementation, much more will be donated each year by conscientious taxpayers who have the love of children, truly America's greatest resource, and our only hope for the future.

We anticipate that this fund will have New Jersey, preferably the Department of Human Services, as its overseer. However, we insist

that none of these funds be assigned for use to the Division of Youth and Family Services for its child abuse programs. It is anticipated that these funds be considered for disbursement by a Commission, with a representative from each county. This Commission would make assessments of program requests and authorize payments directly to each provider agency.

It is also projected by the Passaic County Child Abuse Prevention Council that this State Commission perform evaluations as to the expenditures made and quality of performance of the programming involved. Specifically, we anticipate that the funding allocations will be made in areas of innovation at community levels, in the information, education, and other areas, to fill needs. For example, we feel that training films may be made with these funds by local colleges to teach parent effectiveness; to establish twenty-four hour help lines in communities where they are needed, or in each county; for self-help groups; seminars for teachers, clergy, religious personnel, police personnel, and others in contact with the community, such as firemen, youth service workers, and even postal workers who often see child abuse situations developing.

Ventures of this type will allow maximum use of the income dollars. Also, the statewide evaluation of the various programs put forth will allow for a determination of the most effective usage, which then can be replicated in other parts of our State, or our nation.

Needs for other programs also exist in the areas of training for teenage parents, those involved in drug and alcohol treatment situations, and those requiring assistance in the areas of economic assistance and job training, and where family history of such situations exist.

The assistance of community groups will create an excellent partnership/interrelationship with the funded agencies, which need the assistance as outlined by Commissioner Albanese. We believe that a combination of services will result in aiding our quest towards the prevention of family disfunction and ensure permanence, stability, and protection for our children. Thank you, gentlemen.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Assemblyman Pellecchia?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Yes. Would you more or less elaborate on the issue of how we should handle the money?

MS. MANNING: I would like representatives from the Council to speak right now. Mr. DeSantis, Director of Passaic County Board of Social Services, is a spokesman for the Passaic County Council.

**E D W A R D De S A N T I S:** Mr. Chairman, and panel. When they asked me to be the professional consultant to this body I accepted, because heading an agency that deals with better than 27,000 a year, I can assure you the problem we are enumerating for you today is quite acute to us.

We have, as elected officials and professionals in the field, the responsibility and the duty to give guidance, education, and, I emphasize, protection to our most valued resource in this entire nation, our children.

We talk in terms of breaking welfare cycles, of bringing people into responsible positions in our country today, and the one hope we have of doing that is the protection, care, and guidance of our children, because they are the adults of the future.

I have heard many people speak on this subject today, and I have to take issue with a couple of things. First of all, this bill, as I envision it from the information that has been given to me, would be the first positive breakthrough in a long time; it is something that will permit the public to become a part of what we as professionals have struggled with for years. It gives them the opportunity to dedicate personal funds directly to a system that will help the abused child.

We should not confuse this with any of the other programs that are so aptly handled by the other Divisions, such as the homeless, or mental retardation, etc. We are here for a purpose today, and that purpose is the abused child. Therefore, I believe this fund should be separate and apart from any other type of bureaucratic program that is set up. It should not run the maze of the system, which at times is too slow and ineffective to bring immediate, decisive decision-making to the local levels, to permit them to perform adequately in helping with these types of problems.

I believe, however, that all bureaucratic systems are not wrong, because most of us in this room work for one type or another of bureaucratic system.

We have the fiscal end of this thing already in place through the Department of Human Services, and I think we should use that to control the flow of the money and to account for its expenditure. But, I am in favor of having -- and I put to you that this is paramount -- a separate Commission to control these moneys and dispense them for use at the local level.

I further say to you that it is essential that all of the counties in the State of New Jersey have at least one representative on the Commission. While it seems to be a large and perhaps unwieldy Commission, I say to you that will not be so. Selection of the people to serve on this Commission, with true professionalism in mind, would not give you an unwieldy group; instead, it would give you a group that would truly represent the people -- because, after all, it is going to be their money that is going to be dispensed. It should go toward the programs that they think are of paramount importance.

I do not believe at this time that it would serve the best interest to put it directly through the Human Services Council system we have in place. That system is new; it is floundering with its own problems in areas which have not as yet been developed -- through no fault of its own. It is because it's new that this is happening. To thrust such an important system into its purview of responsibility, I think, would be a mistake at this time. Therefore, I would recommend that this bill be passed, and that it be used as a guide -- even if it is the tip of the iceberg -- to give you, as legislators, the impetus to move forward, and to put the money where it would be used properly. In other words, I think that through legislation you could devise a regular funding for this system, in addition to the check write-off system for the taxes. It would permit you to have the flow of moneys necessary to be able to do the work that has to be done with it.

Now, let me say this. Estimates as to what it is going to cost to take care of these children, and to do what has to be done -- in the beginning, there are no such estimates. You will have to work

with the system for a period of time, to get an idea of where you are going and what is necessary, and to get the proper input, and then, begin to establish the type of funding necessary, and the commission structure necessary to take care of it. If you delay in what you are doing, it is yet another setback for this worthy cause. To begin, even with this small beginning in dollars -- not in intent, but in dollars -- I think is paramount to all of us. I think we would do a great disservice to our children if we did not embrace this and move forward with it as quickly as possible. Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Grace?

**G R A C E G E R U S I C:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to commend the Committee and, particularly, the authors and coauthors of the legislation. Mr. DeSantis put it very aptly, and I reenforce his statement. You do not need any more dialogue on the issue. However, I would just like to make one comment. Many times what happens -- and all of you have noble records in the Legislature -- is that the intent of the legislation you introduce or pass because it is a worthy cause, and certainly there is no more worthy cause, as Ed and Gail both mentioned, than the future of our country which is our children-- What happens many times is that you have legislation passed and signed into law, which is administratively mishandled along the way, and the intent of that legislation never really does the job. That is what I would like to caution everyone about today. That is why the Council supports representation from the entire State -- the twenty-one counties at large.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Paul?

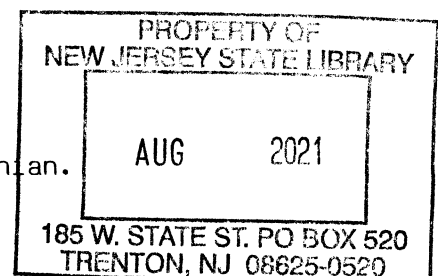
ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: I have no questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: I would just like to take a minute to commend the three of you. I think you made a perfect presentation of my thoughts about why the bill was presented, and what we are to do with it. I hope the Committee sees fit to take some of your suggestions and put them into the bill. Again, I want to thank the three of you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you.

MR. DeSANTIS: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Dr. Anna Haroutunian.



**D R. A N N A H A R O U T U N I A N:** Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Committee members. I am here this morning to represent the New Jersey Chapter of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse. In addition to that, I think it is fair that you should know my background. I am a pediatrician. I have been in private practice in Passaic County. I have worked as a pediatrician for the New Jersey State Department of Health. For about seven years, I have been the director of a children's hospital emergency room and, you know, 15% of the children who appear in such hospital emergency rooms are abused. For the past seven years, I have been the head of a unit which provides care to sexually abused children.

At the risk of sounding disjointed, I am going to delete some of the things I wanted to say, because they have already been said. We are all aware that child abuse exists in substantial numbers throughout our State and country. I would like to make the point that it is increasing. Not only is the reporting increasing, but the problem is increasing.

I think, for the purposes of discussion, I would like to clarify what we consider child abuse. We usually have four categories of child abuse. One is physical abuse, one is neglect, one is emotional abuse, and the last one is child sexual abuse. Each one of these is different, and can exist independently, except, of course, for the emotional abuse. If you have any kind of abuse, I don't see how you are going to escape emotional abuse. But, those are the four categories that we deal with.

We have already made the point that it exists in all socioeconomic groups and in all ethnic groups. I would just like to emphasize that that means we're talking about child abuse occurring in my neighborhood, to my friends, and that is, again, your neighborhood and your friends. It is not something that happens to other people.

Now, there is a cycle to this condition and that, in a way, is the beauty of being able to intervene, because partly through the treatment, you can do prevention, and eradicate. In other words, when you are identifying this generation of potential abusers, you really have a long, far-reaching effect.

I am surprised no one has raised the question, but I feel we should emphasize that child abuse can be prevented. Some of the intervention for prevention has already proved to be effective. So, prevention does work. What are the ways of prevention? One mode of prevention is identification. Who are the high-risk groups? You have heard teen-age pregnancies mentioned, and there are other such categories which can be identified; for example, children from intensive care nurseries, and so on. So, high-risk groups can be identified, and you can teach parenting skills. Parenting skills can be taught, and it does make a difference; it does affect the problem.

For those of you who are interested, and who would like to have objective references, there are studies which substantiate what I am telling you. It is not just a general impression. These are prospective studies which show that identifying high risks, addressing your attention to them, and teaching parenting skills are effective.

Now, that is what I have to say about child abuse. Coming to the bill, each of us has expertise. My expertise is not in legislation. I can tell you that the National Chapter is very happy with this bill. I personally am happy with the bill. It is modeled on the bill from Michigan. One of the physicians who is a leader in child abuse, Ray Helfer, was instrumental in drawing up the bill in Michigan. I think that bill was enacted in 1982 and, as Ciro told us, it has brought in about \$600,000 in what would be, I guess, the first year. I think it is anticipated that about \$2 million will be brought in.

With the administration of the fund -- with the way this is set up -- frankly, we like the autonomy of the board. It would be in, but not of the Department.

I think I will just ask you for questions at this time.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Are there any questions? Assemblyman Cuprowski?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Yes. Doctor, you mentioned one point that I was very interested in. You said that prevention does work. Maybe you could elaborate a little bit on that, if you will. What type of prevention?

DR. HAROUTUNIAN: All right. As has been mentioned here, and as is common knowledge, virtually all the child abusers have been abused children themselves. That does not mean that all adults who were abused as children will be child abusers, but the other way around, it usually holds true. In other words, the person who abuses has been abused.

There has already been research which would help identify individuals early on who would be vulnerable to abusing children. That work, while it has made great strides, is still new. This work in identification has happened in nursing assessing skills, in medicine, and in the social fields. So, basically what is going on is that there is an earlier identification of what the problem is. Once you identify these populations, then there are programs developed which address the particular problems they have. For example, you know that teen-age pregnancy is a large problem and, where there are teen-age births, that is, infants born to teen-age mothers, the child abuse incidence, again, can be shown to be higher in that group. So, the thing to do in a situation where you have high teen-age births, is to have a program where you can teach parenting to pregnant teen-agers. That would be one thing. Family planning might be another thing. In the particular institution from which I come —and this is not unique, there are many others around — there is a family life education program. Once we identify a youngster who is abused, all right, you have already gotten to the point where the child is abused, then what can you do? Of course, working with the appropriate agencies, the treatment of that family then becomes preventive for this child who is growing up, not to abuse his own child. Basically, what you do is break the cycle. You try to teach skills to the parent and, in the meantime, you work with the child to provide a more nurturing environment in which the child can develop. There is a buddy system in this circuit. Other programs have foster grandparents, and so on.

So, there are many different kinds of programs which are being developed and are working today.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: I have one short question, Doctor. To the best of your ability, what do you think would be the catalyst to get the money into the proper hands?

DR. HAROUTUNIAN: The catalyst?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Yes. What mechanics should there be as far as the bill is concerned — who should control the money, and how should it get where it is supposed to be?

DR. HAROUTUNIAN: I think, and I feel our Chapter thinks, that that should be done through some commission, such as is mentioned in the bill. It might be expanded a bit, the way Ciro suggested, but we feel this would be a good way to determine priorities for how the funds should be spent.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you, Doctor.

DR. HAROUTUNIAN: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Margaret Derrick.

**M A R G A R E T D E R R I C K :** Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing us to be here. I am a member of the New Jersey State Public Affairs' Committee of Junior Leagues. I only have a two-paragraph statement to read but, as Dr. Haroutunian did, I would like to add a little background on myself, which might lend a little more legitimacy to my stand here this morning.

I am a parent; I have two small children; I have been on the State Board of Parents Anonymous for the past year; and, I am also the new president of a parenting center begun in Montclair. This center will provide resources and parenting skills for parents of young children in the area.

But, now to the bill itself. The State Public Affairs' Committee of the New Jersey Junior Leagues, which represents 4,000 women, supports the Child Life Protection Fund Act. We have been mandated to study and take action on behalf of children in the areas of health, education, and welfare. As a public action group, we commend the action taken by the Assembly, and Assemblyman Pelleccchia for introducing this bill.

This legislation will support the development of community-based child abuse prevention programs, focus public attention on the needs of the children in New Jersey, and improve, overall, the quality of family life for all individuals caught in the cycle of child abuse and neglect. In the end, the prevention of child abuse and neglect will improve life for all. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. Are there any questions from the Committee?

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: I have just one quick question -- a point of information. I think your Committee has made people aware that although the great majority of neglect and abuse cases come from urban areas, people more and more are beginning to be aware that these cases come from the suburban affluent communities as well. I think that is something people have not realized but, instead, have focused all the attention of neglect and abuse strictly on the urban areas. I think it is important that people from all areas, not just urban areas, realize that this is not a local problem, but is a statewide and national problem. Thank you.

MS. DERRICK: We agree. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. Rose Cooper and Lorraine Barbalinardo.

**R O S E C O O P E R:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. We applaud this Committee for its attempts to improve services for the protection of our children. I have been sitting here today listening to the testimony of a group of people who are involved with the protection of children. We have reviewed the bill which is being addressed this afternoon, and we would like to make the following suggestions concerning the management of the proposed Child Life Protection Fund.

**L O R R A I N E B A R B A L I N A R D O:** We feel that provisions should exist to provide alternate membership on whatever commission you decide upon. Commission members should not review or vote on

programs they have a vested interest in, or which may compete with his or her own program. This conflict of interest can be avoided with an alternate membership program. In other words, we have come up against a bureaucratic system whereby, if people sitting on a particular panel are interested in funding various programs, even relative to child abuse, their agency receives more funding than the other people who are asking for particular moneys.

We would like to have the word "prevention" clarified. Relative to Commissioner Albanese's testimony, we agree with all of his points. At this time, I think I should tell you a little bit about our organization. You will notice we call it the Community Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse. This is what we are doing. We are following each and every proposal and purpose mentioned in Commissioner Albanese's statement. We have a community awareness program, whereby we go out into the community — by the way, we are based in Jersey City, Hudson County — at least once a month. We are all volunteers, for the most part. I am a Guidance Counselor in the Jersey City Public High School, as well as a former elementary counselor. I am a volunteer with this program.

We show the public slides, very shocking slides, about abused children. We provide parenting education to people. We realize that courses such as this are not in the schools at this particular time; we were never taught how to be parents. It is not instinctive; we do not believe it is an instinct. We believe much of the public must be taught how to be parents. We have self-help groups. Our organization is very, very small. The reason it is small is because we initially went before the Community Development Block Grant, and asked them for \$140,000 to start this program, which we felt would be beneficial. Remember, we are preventing child abuse. We, like the doctor before us, believe that a prevention program is needed. The Division of Youth and Family Services does not have a preventive program per se. We have spoken to the Division of Youth and Family Services. We have written, asking if we could have a service contract with them; we have a

letter showing that we have asked them for a contract. However, we have been refused a contract. They have not answered our reply.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Excuse me, you have been refused, or they haven't answered your reply?

MS. BARBALINARDO: I'm sorry; they haven't answered our reply.

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: So, you haven't been refused at this point, is that correct?

MS. COOPER: I think what Ms. Barbalinardo is trying to make you understand, is that we have tried to make contact with the community through the Division of Youth and Family Services over the past two and a half years for the prevention of child abuse. We have been through the bureaucracies; we have made proposals to the Community Services Block Grant, and to the Social Services Block Grant, to ask for contract services through the Division of Youth and Family Services, as well as the Community Development Block Grant. Now, Commissioner Albanese is reiterating everything we have been accomplishing for the last two and a half years. We do have a commendable track record. The main goals of the organization are to find ways and develop resources to prevent child abuse. Our two goals when we started out were: (1) public awareness, and (2), development of a parental guidance center to act as an advocate to the parent who is having problems coping with her responsibilities to her children.

We have done this. We have serviced sixty-seven families. We have had approximately seventeen presentations to the community, and have reached over 3,000 people.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: May I ask a question? May I interrupt you for a second?

MS. COOPER: Surely.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: You mentioned sixty-seven families, and you mentioned making presentations, but what are we actually doing? I want to commend you for what you are doing, believe me when I say this. But, what are we actually doing to educate children and

parents in the mass area? We're talking about, you know, once someone has a problem, fine, we'll go to their parents and show them a movie. What are we doing as far as going into the schools and showing movies? What are we doing as far as having PTA groups see the movies? What are we doing as far as public television is concerned? This is child abuse; we have a problem in the State of New Jersey, not only New Jersey, but in the nation. But, what are we doing with it? Should some of this money be used, maybe, to obtain a documentary film on child abuse, and to possibly make it mandatory that it be shown, as far as our health programs in the schools are concerned? Show it to everybody. Hey, talk to your neighbors, talk to your friends, "Is this happening to you?" That is what I want to hear.

MS. COOPER: Okay. Let me explain that a public presentation consists of. We go into the community. We have been to the Board of Education, and in the school system, to the Home Economics Department and to the guidance counselors. We have been to the probation department, the police department — I don't have the list with me — the American Legion Post, the home schools, and the PTAs. We have been to all of them in our small community of Jersey City. We also addressed what we call "black associations." Through these presentations what we do, is explain what child abuse is, how you can prevent child abuse by recognizing the abused child, and once aware of child abuse, become aware of how to report it. We give them the needed materials which explain to them in depth exactly how to take these steps — the process you have to take in order to report a case of child abuse.

A lot of people do not know about N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.13. They can be anonymous when they make a report of child abuse. You can't prevent these things from happening, if when you pick up a phone and say, "The little boy next door to me is screaming because he is being beaten," you are afraid you are going to become involved, because you are a next door neighbor and they will know that you phoned. People will just not do it. We have found that people are

very ignorant of these laws. It is very important for them to understand how to report child abuse, as well as how to identify an abused child, to try to even reach out to that family to ask if they need help, and to try to direct them to the right agencies before the situation becomes a crisis.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: May I ask you another question? When you have people who know of child abuse — for argument's sake, a neighbor or someone -- has it been followed through by the authorities, that you know of, or have the authorities been negligent in doing their job? I think that is very important.

MS. COOPER: Well, it is a very complex issue.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: It sure is.

MS. COOPER: It is very complex. We have reported approximately fifty cases through our office to the Division of Youth and Family Services. I would say the success rate is about 50%. In other words, what happens is, we will report a case of child abuse to the Division of Youth and Family Services, usually from a community member who comes into our agency and says, "Can you help me; I want to do this, but I do not want to use my name?" Believe it or not, even though they do have anonymity, they really do not want to get involved. However, what they are doing is, they are using us as a way to fulfill their purpose. They want us to report the details. Okay? What happens is, there is not enough communication involving the reports of child abuse between other agencies. We can call the Division of Youth and Family Services and say, "We have a report of child abuse. We have the name of the child, and the age of the child." We can tell them what the incident might be, and whether the child is being abused physically, sexually, being neglected, or being left alone. We have reported a number of different cases in a number of different areas. Actually, when it is a crisis situation, they act very well. But, we feel that before-- In other words, if it is a borderline case where they can't really substantiate anything, those cases are most likely closed. Unless there is something they can really substantiate, the

cases are closed. Therefore, in cases that are closed, we must pick up on those families which will eventually become crisis situations, where the child will be reached only after the abuse has actually occurred, and the child has been physically or mentally abused, or both.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: What has your organization done— Let's say I report something to your organization and, all of a sudden, the Division of Youth and Family Services closes the case. What follow-up is done on this? Is there any follow-up?

MS. COOPER: What we do is, we have Release of Information forms. We have tried to work with DYFS but it has been very difficult.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I know it.

MS. COOPER: It has been very difficult.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: How best can this bill -- and I realize maybe we are talking about money -- serve you in your community and, likewise, the State of New Jersey? Now, we are not talking about millions; we are talking about maybe \$500,000 or \$600,000. You know, I'm not even going to use a figure.

MS. COOPER: Right. Well, we have functioned on a \$15,000 budget, which is extremely minimal, and it has been really very difficult. It is out of the goodness of the hearts of a lot of the people who are members of the organization that we have been able to function in the way we have.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Have you had any cases you reported, and then, God forbid, something spectacular happened?

MS. COOPER: Yes, we have. Is that what you are looking for?

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Yes. What have the authorities done about it when you said, "Why didn't you follow up on it then?" See, that is the point. We want to cut this red tape, and get things done. Our primary concern is the child.

MS. COOPER: Okay. What happened on two separate occasions was, a volunteer from the organization, a work study student from

Jersey City State College who is working with our organization, brought to my attention a child in her building who was being abused. She reported it from her home on two separate occasions. On the third occasion, she brought it to my attention and asked me to follow through with it. I reported it myself. The response we got when we asked for follow-up was that they did not find anything wrong; the family was fine. They said, "You know, we cannot give you any detailed information; it is against the laws of confidentiality. If you will send us a Release of Information form signed by the client, we will then release the information to you, but only minimally if there is any criminal -- in other words, if a family is going to be taken into a court system." You know, they are not allowed to give us any information at all.

So, it makes a stopgap. You know, we really cannot communicate; there is no open communication. What happened on the fourth occasion was the same. We log our reports -- how many times we reported an incident, the times of day we reported the incident, and the worker we reported it to. We try to follow up as best we can; however, there is that stopgap. On the fourth occasion, we made the phone call, and we were told that the family had been a case, and that they had been recently investigated, or visited. DYFS had had, I believe, a three-month or six-month priority with the family, but the case was actually closed.

We demanded to speak to the supervisor, and we had someone go out to the house immediately, because we had seen physical signs of abuse on that child. What happened was, the police had to be called in, the child had to be hospitalized, and the child was then taken away from the parents. We had called on four separate occasions, but had to actually force them to go out to investigate that case.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I agree, and I think this whole Committee agrees with prevention. That should be number one. But, I think we need an educational program on prevention.

MS. COOPER: Right, exactly.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I think some children don't even know they are being sexually abused; they think it is a way of life. Assemblyman Felice has a question.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Mr. Chairman, through you, would you say your agency, or your group, is basically an agency of awareness and reporting, rather than an enforcing agency of any kind? You do not have the authority—

MS. COOPER: (interrupting) We do not have the power of authority.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Not only the power, but maybe not the expertise to actually go into the home and meet with the parents to discuss a problem -- is that correct?

MS. COOPER: No.

MS. BARBALINARDO: We feel as though we have the expertise to speak with the parents. We have a social worker on our staff, and one of the things the social worker does, naturally, is communicate and counsel the particular parent before the fact, or, in some cases, after the fact.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Of course, but you have no authority though.

MS. BARBALINARDO: We do not have the authority to deal with a child abuser.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: If you have a child you feel is being abused—

MS. COOPER: Excuse me; I think I am more familiar with the laws. At any time, any member of the community, or any private agency -- anyone -- can intervene in a child abuse case. You do not have to have specific authority, unless you want to go into the home. If you want to go into the home, there is a procedure you must follow. But, we are allowed to do something if we feel that this has not been taken care of.

What happened in the particular case I spoke about, was that DYFS made a public apology to us. They told us there had been a switch of caseworkers, and these things do happen, mind you.

However, I think what we need to concentrate on in prevention is, when a family is rejected because there isn't any substantiated abuse, and you're talking about a situation where people have recognized there is a problem, that family should be sent to a local agency, a community-based organization which will work with them, and help them to get through the problems they are having at the time, so they will not become a crisis case, and the child will not wind up dead or maimed, in a hospital, or even become mentally disabled.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: What I am bringing up as a point is that basically your organization is, in a sense, a duplication of county, local and State organizations, which should be doing the work and the follow-through that you are doing. Yours is a volunteer group. You know, legally you have certain limitations. You cannot go into anyone's home. Also, you are subject to legal ramifications for interference when there is no basis. The table actually can be turned. Teachers have discovered incidents many times, and have reported them to supervisors, and so forth. It is a very, very delicate and touchy subject, whether someone from the public sector should go into someone's home and determine what happened. If you ask, the answer is, "The child fell and hurt himself." There are many things. What we are saying here is that your group is basically a reporting group, to make people in responsible positions aware of problems, rather than just being an enforcing agency. Basically, you have no authority — local, State, or county — to go in and become an enforcing agency. There are authorized agencies in the county, in the local municipality, and in the State. What moneys from this bill would be --

MS. BARBALINARDO: (interrupting) We are not an enforcing agency; however, we are a helping agency.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: There is a difference.

MS. BARBALINARDO: Yes, but we do help to prevent child abuse.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I think it is a question, Assemblyman Felice--

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: (interrupting) Now, the bill, in a sense, will provide moneys to the proper agencies to assist those volunteer committees and agencies such as yours to help to prevent child abuse and to eliminate these problems.

MS. COOPER: Okay. What I would like to do is give you some of the experiences we have had at the Parental Guidance Center in trying to find a solution for the prevention of child abuse. When we have a woman, let's say, who comes in off the street, or who is referred to us by the local school board-- We receive referrals from Boards of Education of many different schools and from other service agencies, as well as DYFS itself. They have used us by sending clients to us they are having problems with, if they do not have another resource to send them to.

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: I am trying to tie in your purpose, the aims of your organization, with what this bill will eventually help to accomplish.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Assemblyman Cuprowski?

ASSEMBLYMAN CUPROWSKI: Ms. Cooper, it is my understanding that this particular bill would obviously help your organization. You are located in Jersey City, and I represent Jersey City, your particular area. It is also my understanding, based on what you have said about having a budget of \$15,000 -- a total budget for operation, salaries, and so forth -- that this is obviously not enough money. I would assume that a bill like this, perhaps could give you another avenue or another potential source of funding. As an example, you mentioned that you have a social worker. I believe you had a problem at one time, perhaps still have a problem, with turnover, because of salary. Maybe you could elaborate a little bit on that. But, when you have a social worker with a master's degree, versus a social worker without a master's degree, you are talking money, obviously, for a paid professional to come in to supply that type of service. In addition, it is my understanding that you also

have the benefit of getting work study participants from the local Jersey City State College, as an example. If you have a paid -- not necessarily a paid -- but a master in social work who can come in to give you additional people on a work study program, or perhaps on an interne program, and so forth, if you do not have the dollars to get these people, to attract these people, then, obviously, I would assume you do have a problem, and this bill could probably help your organization.

MS. COOPER: Oh, it definitely could. We have had a lot of major problems. When we first started out, we worked on a \$15,000 budget. We had no place to go; we had no site location. It was kind of a challenge. They said, "Here's \$15,000; see what you can do with it." What we did was, we advertised in the paper, and we asked a lot of members of the community if they knew of any space we might be able to use as a site location for a Parental Guidance Center, which would be a service to the community for persons who were having problems coping with their children. That is basically what our goal was when we opened the Parental Guidance Center.

We opened up at a storefront that was used by another organization as a meeting place once a month. We were able to stay there for approximately one year, until the organization gave up their lease, which left us without any funding to pay the rent. So, we had to find another place to locate our Center. It has been a terrible struggle. When we opened up, we had someone with a master's in social work. We also had three work study students from the colleges. We had volunteers in the fields of nursing and special ed. It was working well. What we found was, as the program went on and the needs were assessed, we had to cut back on a lot of different things because there was no money, as far as even paying postage, paying telephone bills, or paying for transportation if our social worker accompanied a client, if there was a need for support, to, let's say, the courthouse, to the Board of Education, or to a welfare agency, depending on the needs of the family. There are costs involved in this, and it has made it very difficult. We have

lost our master's in social work at this point. She has left for bigger and better things. She was only getting paid \$90.00 a week, for fifteen hours.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I realize we can go into every agency in the entire State of New Jersey, and every one will have a problem. I think the question is the bill. We do not know what the commission will do, or how it will allocate the moneys. I think the thing to do right now is to see that this bill is passed, so we can have some funding, and some preventive measures.

I want to thank you very much.

MS. BARBALINARDO: We need many more social workers, and we intend to expand.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Here is the man from your district (indicating Assemblyman Cuprowski). You ought to tell him you want more people.

MS. BARBALINARDO: Right. We intend to expand, if we can be funded.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: You received your original money from a block grant?

MS. COOPER: We got the \$15,000 from a Community Development Block Grant, and then we were appropriated \$20,000, but it was rescinded.

MS. BARBALINARDO: It was \$25,000.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: All right. Assemblyman Pellecchia would like to make a statement.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: I appreciate the testimony you have given here this afternoon. It really accentuates the necessity for the bill, and, certainly, I appreciate your coming here.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much.

MR. VUOCOLO (from audience): Assemblyman Pellecchia, may I—

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: (interrupting) Tell him that I am the Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: Assemblyman Visotcky is the Chairman here. (laughter)

MR. VUOCOLO: I just wanted to reiterate some of the things you said, and I want to remind you gentlemen — I'm sure most of you know — that the key word here today is prevention.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: There is no question about it.

MR. VUOCOLO: Prevention can be a harried mother who has no food. Prevention can be a family which is being dispossessed, a family where the man comes home and he has lost his job, a family where they have no toys and no clothing for Christmas, and we have worked with those. Now, if you don't think a mother is going to be harried because of her inaptness, or her inability to serve her child at Christmastime, and do what my mother did many times, whack you on the back of the ear, because you can't have something. Just by making appeals — and let me put in a plug for Channel 9 — they provided Rose Cooper with clothing, complete outfits, plus toys, for seventy-five children. God knows what that meant on Christmas Eve. God knows, in a child abuse situation, what may have been prevented.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: There is no question about it. There is no limit to what you can do, if you have the money.

MS. BARBALINARDO: Excuse me, may I read a letter from one of our clients which was sent to Commissioner Albanese?

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: I would very much prefer if you would give it to us in writing. We will put it right in the record.

MS. BARBALINARDO: All right; I would like to do that.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: If you will give it to the young lady, she will see that it is included in the transcript of the hearing.

MS. BARBALINARDO: Thank you.

**L O U   A R T I F I C I O (from audience):** I am Assemblyman Paul Cuprowski's aide, Lou Artificio. I would like to commend Rose. I have worked with her on many occasions. She also does volunteer work for senior citizens. I have helped her dispense butter and cheese, and everything else. She has a hectic job, and she is trying to help the community in every way she can. Thank you again, Rose, for appearing here.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: We appreciate it very much. Pamela Goar, do you wish to make a statement for the Department of Human Services of Passaic County, to clarify the statement from Commissioner Albanese?

**P A M E L A G O A R:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Pamela Goar; I am the Director of the Passaic County Department of Human Services, and Coordinator of the Passaic County Human Services' Advisory Council.

I would like to shed some light on the slight controversy alluded to earlier, and that is the issue of who on the local and State level should administer the Child Life Protection Fund. The Commissioner is proposing the use of the local Human Services Advisory Councils. A statement was made by one of the Assemblymen that the administration should come from the grass roots up. The Human Services Advisory Council in our County is certainly a grass roots organization, and if the make-up of our Council is typical across the State, then you do indeed already have in place the local organization that could most adequately advise the State on local planning and the use of whatever dollars may become available.

A statewide commission formed as a result of this bill would still assume the role of statewide coordinator and planner, with the local Human Services Advisory Councils feeding information and plans to this body. The Passaic County Council is comprised of fifteen providers from local nonprofit community-based organizations, thirteen consumers, actual users of local social service programs, and six consumer advocates.

Geographically, we represent up-county, down-county, intercity, suburban, and rural. We represent various ethnic groups, male and female, a wide age spectrum, and we are bipartisan. Our County Department and our County Council started their work last summer, and have served the State Department by making recommendations on approximately \$500,000 in new social services and homeless money for Passaic County.

The Council has spent long hours in discussion, reviewing proposals, site visits, and meetings with various directors of community-based organizations, and has made determinations and recommendations, in all good intention, for the improvement of the quality of life for the citizens of Passaic County.

Currently, we are in the midst of conducting a Needs Assessment Survey, and 105 local agencies are participating in this process. Hopefully, the results of this survey will provide us with more objective information, which will help us in determining recommendations. We take our work very seriously, although admittedly we are in the embryonic stage, and are in need of expanding and improving both our Department and our Council. I support the Commissioner in his recommendation to use an already established mechanism for the administration of these funds. I have copies of our bylaws and membership list with me for your review.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? (no response) May we have George Fasciano, Superintendent of Schools of Palisades Park, please?

**G E O R G E F A S C I A N O:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you and the Committee for allowing me to make a presentation. I do not have a formal report, because I was not expected to present.

Coming from a small suburban-size community in the eastern section of Bergen County, the problem of child abuse is no less pronounced than it is elsewhere, as I have heard from the people who have spoken here this morning. I would tend to think, having heard everyone address the issue, that moneys from your bill could best be spent by developing a proper liaison with the Department of Education. I think that, as an extension of the home, we serve to a large capacity in helping to identify children who are abused. Also, there should be moneys for in-service, if that is possible, to reach down into the small communities such as mine, informing teachers of their rights, obligations, and potential immunities, which I think they have to know about.

I would be interested in answering any questions you may have.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: You are to be commended. I am glad to see a Superintendent of Schools here, because I think teachers and school administrators can really find child abuse, especially if they are properly trained. Can you tell me if you have had any case where a teacher has gone to the authorities, or told a social worker that there may be child abuse in the community? I'm not saying whether you did or not, but has there been--

MR. FASCIANO: (interrupting) I think everyone has mentioned the problem as the "tip of the iceberg." We have had serious cases of child abuse in all the small communities in the suburban areas of New Jersey; I'm sure of that. I think the problem we have is, how do we address these issues, how do we identify them, how do we get the message to the proper authorities, and, how do we develop effective prescriptions and follow-through.

There are two cases which do come to mind. The first case was a one-parent family -- which is probably part of the condition which exists -- where we had to take a child home and, upon reaching the apartment, we found there were three other children behind locked doors.. It was a frame house. We called the police and found out that we couldn't do anything about it. It took about two hours to reach DYFS, before authority was received to open the door. Yet, when the mother came home-- Child abuse notification often leads to teacher abuse. The poor teacher who did notify the police received a great deal of verbal abuse, letters, and complaints to the Board of Education, so that, in effect what you have, are many teachers shying away from the issue, simply because they are concerned about the overreaction, or the exaggeration which results from their intention to be effective.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: But, do you think that a program within the school system, regardless of where the school system is located--

MR. FASCIANO: (interrupting) I think you need legislation, sir, appropriate legislation through the Department of Education. For example, we are required to have appropriate legislation to develop a thorough and efficient program of instruction. Obviously, that includes just about everything from special education to physical education. We are also involved in a nutrition program. What would be so wrong if we were to include the importance of and the impact of child abuse in a good and proper instructional program, just as we include discipline?

You just can't do things like this and expect it to result in very much. The Department of Human Services' poll, and I think Commissioner Albanese referred to this particular poll, was merely advisory. It did reach us, but what we really need is a mandate requiring that we become accountable, at least for one phase, possibly identifying. Then, create appropriate in-service programs of information and immunity, so that if a teacher does happen to overstep his or her position, the teacher will not be abused by parents, civic officials, or by anyone else who may come back with comments in support of a parent.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Don't you think the teachers, through the Department of Education, or really through their union so they won't have a problem, should notify you? Then the report could be made and it could be a confidential thing, instead of the teacher saying--

MR. FASCIANO: (interrupting) But, there should be accountability.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: There is no question about that.

MR. FASCIANO: The accountability should be administrative accountability, so that we do not ignore the issue, or refuse to go as far as we have to. I think we have to get more involved, because, as an extension of the home, we actually see the problems first, and we are probably closer than anyone else.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Assemblyman Felice?

ASSEMBLYMAN FELICE: Yes. Mr. Chairman, this is absolutely true. Last year, this Committee put a bill through to become law, that mandated all nurses, attendants or doctors, who have abused senior citizens, or children, or anyone else who is neglected or abused come before them, to report such cases. They are criminally responsible to report such cases. I know from actual cases in different communities, including my own, that where teachers responded through the proper authority to let them know that a child that they had before them, or children they had before them-- As Mr. Fasciano very ably put it, these people, instead of being commended for following through -- through their supervisors, through their guidance people, through whatever department -- on reporting a case, were actually very severely criticized for stirring up a can of worms. That is what it amounted to. I think we -- and I say we meaning the legislators -- have a responsibility to put legislation in to protect people who want to report such cases. I think that is coming.

MR. FASCIANO: I think the shortcomings in developing effective programs is not the lack of money, but rather the ability to develop achievable goals. I will just give one example. In the development of our special education program, whereby we properly identify and write prescriptions for children who have special needs, for the longest time it was not possible to come up with an effective program, because all a parent had to do was object to a particular identification and program, and we became involved in a maze of controversy. Now, the law has been refined; it has been properly written, reviewed and approved. At the present time, a problem with a youngster is truly in the hands of the school psychologist and the child study team. In fact, they have taken the principal and the superintendent of schools out of the picture.

So, if a child does have a learning need, or a disability, those people who are capable and qualified, and have the responsibility in a well-written mandate, can identify a youngster in need of a particular program, and the youngster can be placed in

a particular school or program even though a parent objects. As a result of this I think you have a greater effort to deal with the handicapped, and you have greater results.

This problem, also, can be brought over to the area of child abuse. No one seems to know what to do. Those of us who are close to the situation and can identify children who may be abused physically, really only refer the matter out, say, to the Division of Youth and Family Services. Then, it is forgotten about as far as we are concerned. We may see that child for a whole year, as we are now doing with a youngster, but we are simply told by the Division of Youth and Family Services that something is being done, or all that can be done at the present time is being done. Therefore, we do not know what the results are, or what other reactions there may be to the case.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: What you are telling us, in essence, is that we should have a follow-up to this type of legislation. Either Assemblyman Pellecchia or the Committee should follow-up, as far as going to the Department of Education to get an educational program for our teachers, and possibly make it a mandate in some respect.

MR. FASCIANO: Well, I think you have to develop a greater liaison with the Department of Education, to develop and mandate legislation so that those of us who are closest to the situation will be accountable to come up with a proper identification program.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. I think you have enlightened the Committee on many aspects. May we have a copy of your material, please? We want to know how many thousands of dollars were spent, and what they did.

MR. FASCIANO: You may have this copy.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. Ellen Bullock. Ms. Bullock, thank you for being patient with us.

**E L L E N E. B U L L O C K:** I'm last, but not least.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: No, there is another witness after you. I am not going to make you last.

MS. BULLOCK: Since you all have a copy of my testimony, I will not repeat everything in it, even though it is rather short. I just want to say a few things concerning the feelings of Concerned Parents for Head Start about this program. I represent a head start agency called Concerned Parents for Head Start. We serve 405 low-income children. I think the important thing about our program is that we have a concentrated group of the poorest people in the City of Paterson. So, they have all of the attendant problems—lack of educational skills, poor housing, teen-age parents, lack of emotional and community support and health problems. We could spend maybe a half an hour listing all the things. Therefore, these families are suffering a great deal of stress. We have the perfect potential for lots of child abuse from the families in our group. As a matter of fact, a number of our children are referrals from DYFS. We work closely with them to try to provide some relief in cases where families are abusing children.

We welcome the introduction of this bill, in whatever form it happens to take, because it seems to represent a step in an attempt to prevent child abuse. This is one of the problems we have dealt with, with DYFS. They have not had the resources, the way the agency is set up, and the way the law is stated, to deal with the preventive aspect. So, I think all of us here in this room recognize that there is a big hole in the attempts which are being made.

In serving our 405 families, we find that many of our children have problems in getting the most out of the program. This is our Early Childhood Education Program. We attempt to give these children a start before they get into the public schools, so they will be able to better take advantage of whatever educational opportunities there are for them. But, we find that because of all these problems -- we have a regular school attendance -- sometimes when we go to find out why the child is not there, we find a number of reasons. We find illness on the part of the parent, we find people being dispossessed from their homes and, quite often, when we

make a visit we find that there is actually no furniture in the house. People are sitting around on boxes. When we work with these families, it takes a great deal of time and effort to attempt to bring other community resources to bear to help them. We have a small social work staff, which is not sufficient to deal with all the problems because one family can take a great amount of time. We would hope that such a program would help us to expand the services of our social work staff. For example, this year we are fortunate in having a one-year, one-time grant, which allows us to have a social work unit from Rutgers University, and I was listening to the ladies who spoke earlier. This has meant a great deal to us, because we were able to extend our services, and to work on an in-depth basis with families. We get a great number of referrals from doctors, the Northside Community Health Center, and St. Joseph's Hospital, because they come into contact with a number of potential abuse or abuse cases. We also deal with handicapped children, but we do not have sufficient resources.

We are also concerned about teaching our parents parenting skills; however, with our regular staff, we do not have enough resources to go into depth and do the kind of job we really need to do, with the large number of very distressed families with whom we deal. So, we welcome any effort that will extend community resources, and will give us more avenues to enable us to go into greater depth in dealing with the variety of distressed people, the problems we see in our attempt to help our children get their head start for school, and, also, help their parents to get their lives together, and realize something for themselves, for their children, and for the improvement of their lives. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Ellen, in your statement here, you have four questions you ask of the Committee.

MS. BULLOCK: Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: The first question is, how much money will be available to individual communities? I don't think anyone can answer that question at this particular time. What

criteria will be used to establish priorities? That will be up to the commission. What particular types of agencies will be considered appropriate to receive the funds? Again, that will be up to the commission. Are grants to be used only for demonstration grant and pilot programs, or will some funding be available to support ongoing programs? That will all be done with the commission, once we have the bill. In fact, we don't even know how much money we can raise.

MS. BULLOCK: Well, the only thing is this.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: (interrupting) I don't want you to walk away from here without getting answers to your questions.

MS. BULLOCK: Fine. As we read the bill, I didn't expect you to be able to answer these questions today. But, I wanted them in the record because I thought it was important for these things to be looked at. They have been referred to in many ways a number of times today, and that is one of the reasons I didn't say anything about them. However, these things are important considerations, because we will not be in a position to know how we can utilize or tap the resources, without the answers to these questions.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Assemblyman Pellecchia?

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: I do not have a question, but a statement. Ellen, I want to thank you for the fine job you're presently doing. I was born and raised in the City of Paterson, and have lived here all of my life. I will probably die here. But, the fact of the matter is, I know the monumental job you have to do. In the City of Paterson, in particular, we have more problems than we care to talk about, except we have to talk about them, and we have to do something to try to help.

MS. BULLOCK: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. Our last witness will be Martha Bolds. You were not on the list, but we squeezed you in.

**MARTHA BOLDS:** Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee: I would like to thank you for squeezing me in. I was not on the

agenda. Sitting here and listening today, I have very serious concerns about child abuse.

First, I will tell you who I am. I am the Director of the Community Action Day Care Center in the City of Paterson. I have served across the State in various child care capacities. Now, I would assume many of you know that across the State there are many, many licensed child care centers. Many of us are locked into a fund, a "cap." Many of the programs do not have social workers; they do not have nurses. So, we are not able to provide a lot of the social service outreach that we should be providing as licensed child care centers. Our concern goes much deeper than dealing specifically with the socialization of children in a particular child care environment. We deal with the family -- the total family.

I would like to speak from my own perspective, and kind of speak locally. I see our child care center as an extension of the family, which means that children cannot come into my center without the representation of the parent involvement aspect. This means we try to focus on getting the parents to really understand their responsibilities to their children. How do we do this? We have workshop meetings and seminars which are open to parents and to communities, where we focus on many aspects of the family --unemployment, education, child abuse, teen-age pregnancy, etc. Day care centers which are already established, and which already have a certain amount of funding and staff available to them, can begin to further our outreach to these particular communities. I think we have to coordinate the effort.

While sitting here today, I heard that there is a lot of fragmentation across the State. One of the questions I think Assemblyman Cuprowski asked was, "How can we prevent child abuse?" Well, how can we prevent child abuse? I was sitting back there really focusing on that particular question, because it becomes a very difficult situation when you have children whose fathers are out of the homes, whose mothers are either unemployed or on welfare,

who have alcoholism in the family, or drug abuse in the family -- it becomes a very, very touchy kind of situation. It seems to me there needs to be some kind of coordinated effort across the State, where everyone focuses on educating the public, as the Chairman indicated, as to the effects of child abuse.

Now, we understand that in child care programs, and in head start programs, you have many teen-age mothers with babies which, in 1980, just overwhelmed the social systems in New Jersey, and in states across the nation. We are about the business of teaching them not only how to take care of those babies, but how to put themselves first, how to reinstill pride in themselves, and how to understand that the system can work effectively for them. I think when we talk about how we can prevent child abuse, we really have to hook up some of the networks across the State to bring these efforts together and say, "Everybody wants a piece of the pie," but there is not enough money to effectively do a qualitative job to prevent child abuse.

I think what the Committee really has to look at, is how this money that is being collected can effectively be used across the State to impact on the widest audience of child abusers.

In my closing comments, I would just like to say that you already have existing agencies which cater to children. We take these children from infancy to five years of age, so some of us do have an impact on those first five critical years. If we can not only develop the children, but help to develop the parents through education, outreach, and referrals, making sure they are in school --even though they have had babies, making sure they stay in school -- and making sure they are referred to the proper agencies to address their particular needs-- You have available to you resources which already exist, and I am proud to say that, as a child care director, I am definitely concerned not only about the child, but about the whole family, and I am concerned about stopping child abuse. I think this can be communicated across the State. Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you very much. That was very good. Would anyone else like to speak? (no response) If not, we wish to thank everyone. We want to thank the Freeholders here in Passaic County for allowing us to use their room for this hearing. I'm sure the Committee will have a report on Assemblyman Pellecchia's bill. It is a bill which reaches all of us, and reaches every community in the State of New Jersey. I think it is a concern of the Committee, likewise every legislator, and everyone in the State of New Jersey. I'm pretty sure something will be done; we hope to see this a reality.

ASSEMBLYMAN PELLECCCHIA: May I close by first thanking the Committee for coming to District 35. I hope that what you have heard here, and what you have seen here, will make a mark on the way the bill will finally come out of Committee. I'm hoping that when this bill does come out of Committee, we will get the support we need from the Assembly floor, from both sides. Thank you all again for coming.

ASSEMBLYMAN VISOTCKY: Thank you.

**(HEARING CONCLUDED)**



ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN OF NEW JERSEY

17 Academy Street, Suite 709  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

February 28, 1984

TO: Assemblyman George J. Otlowski, Chairman  
Members of the Assembly Corrections, Health &  
Human Services Committee

FROM: Ciro A. Scalera, Executive Director

I am here today on behalf of the Association for Children of NJ (ACNJ) to express our strong support for Assembly Bill A-393, which would create a Child Life Protection Fund in the State of New Jersey. ACNJ is a statewide citizen-based advocacy organization dedicated to bettering the lives of New Jersey's children through the improvement of policies and programs that affect them.

Part of ACNJ's goal is to insure that the present programs and services for New Jersey's children are adequate, caring and efficient. We also look to the future to insure a continued positive emphasis and focus on safeguarding children in New Jersey. During the last few years, it has been difficult to fund new programs and services, especially those targeted for early intervention or prevention. Although there has recently been limited success in obtaining some new prevention initiatives, it is unlikely that any on-going commitment in this area will be made from general state revenues given the overall competing demands of our state.

A-393 is a significant bill because it is aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect and because it provides for a funding mechanism separate from the state budget process. Both of these factors represent significant savings to the taxpayer. An increase in prevention programs will reduce family breakdown and thus reduce the need for more costly state intervention. These prevention programs can also be funded without affecting social service budgets or increasing any of the present revenue raising mechanisms in the state.

The primary importance of A-393, however, rests in its total focus on the preventing of child abuse and neglect before it happens. Through preventive services, early identification, intervention, and assistance for abused and neglected children and their families is possible. Court involvement, out-of-home placement and family breakdown can be averted.

ACNJ found, in research done last year, that there has been an increase in the incidence and severity of child abuse in New Jersey. We also confirmed what we had known for years - that protective services workers are forced to respond to crisis cases at the loss of doing prevention work.

At present, fourteen other states have children's trust funds funded either through a surcharge on marriage and birth certificates or through a taxpayer designated portion of a state income tax refund. Both alternatives recognize that it is essential that the money for the fund comes from a reliable source separate from regular appropriations.

The success of the children's trust fund concept in other states is demonstrated by the variety of programs that have been funded. Examples include play programs for children of violent families, training for volunteers to assist new families, and a self-care course for latchkey children. Others have funded child-care education for at risk families such as teenagers and skill development for mentally retarded parents. Several states have implemented sexual assault prevention projects in the public school system.

Another value of the children's trust fund is that it can foster community involvement in child abuse prevention by allowing the community to tailor a program to its needs. It also is a model for prevention easily adopted without pressure on the normal social service budget and programs of the state.

We therefore express our strong support of A-393. We believe, however, that this bill can be strengthened and we agree with the amendments suggested by the New Jersey Chapter of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse. The suggested amendments set forth below are designed to broaden the scope of the fund and to expand the composition of the commission. These amendments include:

1. Changing the name of the fund to the Children's Trust Fund.
2. Adopting a monetary ceiling for the Fund which would inactivate the income collection process.
3. Changing the composition of the appointed advisory council to include:
  - a. one member shall be the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services.
  - b. one member shall be a county prosecutor.
  - c. nine public members who shall be persons who are experienced in child welfare and represent private organizations which provide services, or funding for services, to children in this state designated to prevent, identify, or treat child abuse and neglect, and three of whom shall be appointed by the Governor, three of whom shall be appointed by the president of the Senate, and three of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly. They should reflect geographic and ethnic diversity.
4. Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for direct costs associated with the position, including travel, child care expenses, etc.
5. Funding shall be provided as is deemed appropriate, except that the Commission shall place particular emphasis on community-based programs and services which are designed to develop and demonstrate strategies for the early identification, intervention, and assistance of families and children at risk in order to prevent child abuse and neglect.

It is ironic that we presently have a wildlife protection fund in New Jersey, but not a similar fund for our children. Since realistically this may be the final income tax refund mechanism allowed, we urge that it be a children's trust fund. If children represent our future, let us make a commitment to that future now.



State Public Affairs Committee of  
the New Jersey Junior Leagues

February 29, 1984

ASSEMBLY CORRECTIONS, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER ASSEMBLY BILL 393

Gentlemen:

The State Public Affairs Committee of the New Jersey Junior Leagues, which represents 4,000 women, supports the Child Life Protection Fund Act. We have been mandated to study and take action on behalf of children in the areas of Health, Education and Welfare. As a public action group we commend the action taken by the Assembly in introducing this bill.

This legislation will support the development of community based child abuse prevention programs, focus public attention on the needs of children in New Jersey and improve overall the quality of family life for all individuals caught in the cycle of child abuse and neglect. In the end, the prevention of child abuse and neglect would improve life for all.

Margaret Derrick  
Chairman  
Children's Health and Welfare  
Task Force

57 Gordonhurst Avenue  
Upper Montclair, New Jersey 07043  
783-7047

# COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

162 South Street  
~~162 South Street~~  
Jersey City, N. J. 07307  
201-653-1881(2)  
Executive Director  
Rose Cooper

TESTIMONY: CHILD LIFE PROTECTION FUND

February 29, 1984

We applaud this Commission in its attempts at improving services for the protection of our children. This has been the purpose of the Community Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse since its inception two and a half years ago.

Without a moment's hesitation, we realize that additional funding, and funding sources, must be made available if we are to provide viable prevention/protection services for our future. Because of difficulties the CCPCA has encountered with funding programs over the years, we hope the proposed Commission can provide clear and orderly procedures for funding through the Child Life Protection Fund. We offer the following suggestions concerning management of the proposed Child Life Protection Fund:

1. Provisions should exist to provide alternate membership on the Commission. A Commission member should not review or vote on programs they have a vested interest in or that may compete with his/her own program. This conflict of interest can be avoided with an alternate membership program.
2. Clarify the word "prevention". It has been our experience that protective agencies identify intervention as prevention, and that little effort is made to reach into the community to identify potential or actual abuse before a crisis develops. We feel that a continuous, comprehensive education program is a vital part of prevention.

3. Programs must also be introduced in the schools to reach the abused child and make him/her aware of the assistance available, plus, hopefully, prevent this child from becoming an abusive adult, as happens in over 50% of child abuse cases.
4. The primary goal of this Commission, for at least its first year, should be a heavy concentration of funding and programs in areas identified as having the greatest needs, according to Human Services' statistics.

Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully submitted.



Rose Cooper  
Executive Director

10/20/83

Dear Commissioner Albanes,

I live in Hudson County, in the town of Jersey City. I have two children and I am very aware and worried about the increasing reports of Child Abuse in our County.

I am hoping that you can give me an answer to something that has come to my attention in my community. About a year ago, I was made aware thru a newspaper article, that a Parental Guidance Center was being provided for citizens in my community. The purpose was to help parents become more capable of dealing with their children. The services would include training in Child Development, teen age rap sessions, contributions and resources for those in need of clothing and food and an overall support system to alleviate pressure on families, to help them function as a healthy family unit. I can honestly say I was thrilled to see that something was happening in my community to help parents avoid possible abuse of their children thru this fine program.

I later learned thru a Block Association meeting, approximately two months later, that the speakers who were providing information on Child Abuse and explaining how to recognize abuse in children, how to report it and what our legal rights and responsibilities to all children are, that this group, founded by a member from my own community was the organization responsible for opening the Parental Guidance Center. I had to stand up and commend this organization for the fine work they were doing and let them know how important I felt their work was.

Well, to make a long story short, I will refer to the enclosed article, dated 10/20/83 in my local newspaper, the Jersey Journal. I called the Center to find out what this article meant and I was told that the reality was, they would no longer be able to function with the loss of these funds. They had no money for rent and the remaining funds they did have, would run out by March anyway. The whole neighborhood is talking about what an asset this Center has been to the community and we cannot believe that Government Officials are not responding to their needs, as well as the communities needs. It is unconceivable, how, at a time when abuse is increasing and children are dying everyday, that this fine woman, who developed this much needed community program, has to struggle and fight to continue her fine work. Aren't our children important to our Government anymore? Are they not important to our own future?

We, as a community, protest the loss of this program and implore you to do whatever you can to avoid this from happening. I know it is not your community, but I am sure you will do whatever you can to see that they receive some help. The name of the organization is,  
COMMUNITY COUNSEL FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

533 CENTRAL AVE.

JERSEY CITY, NJ 07307

PHONE 653-1881 or 1882

6x

The name of the Director and Founder of this Organization Program is, ROSE COOPER.

I am not going to sign my name to this letter for a very good reason. I am a client at the Parental Guidance Center. I was faced with a tremendous, unbelievable amount of problems and very nearly became an abusive parent myself. I could see the signs of abuse the speaker was talking about at the meeting I attended, happening to me, and I was scared to death. I got the courage to call and explain my problem and I was amazed at how comfortable they made me feel and how kind they responded to my circumstances. I only go once a month now and I know if I didn't get the help the Center gave me, I would have become abusive to my own precious children, and I shudder to think of the guilt and pain I would be feeling if I didn't have the Center to turn to.

Kindly respond to my letter thru the Parental Guidance Center. I told them I was writing to you and they told me, if you respond they will see that I receive your letter.

Sincerely,

Concerned Community Member

PASSAIC COUNTY  
HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL  
BY-LAWS

DATED: February 8, 1983

PASSAIC COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. NAME

- A. The name of this organization shall be known as the Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council, also referred to as "P.C.H.S.A.C." or the "Council."

ARTICLE II. AUTHORIZATION AND RECOGNITION

- A. The Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council was established by resolution of the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders on October 6, 1982 as the advisory council on human services in Passaic County pursuant to regulations on the New Jersey State Department of Human Services (DHS), promulgated November 4, 1982.
- B. The P.C.H.S.A.C. is recognized as a branch of county government and is a part of the Passaic County Administrative Code, Chapter \_\_\_\_\_.

ARTICLE III. OFFICE

- A. The office of this Council shall be located in Passaic County.

ARTICLE IV. PURPOSES

- A. The Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council shall be the body primarily responsible for advising the New Jersey State and Passaic County governments on the allocations, provisions, delivery systems, and financing of programs designed to meet the needs of human services recipients in Passaic County included under the Human Services Block Grant and other such block grant and categorical grant programs as may be requested and approved by the Department of Human Services and Passaic County Board of Freeholders and deemed appropriate by the Council.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

- A. The Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council shall be appointed by the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders.
- B. The term of each member shall be for three years with one-third of the membership reappointed each year. An appointee filling an unexpired term will simply serve the remaining time of the unexpired term before consideration for reappointment.
- C. Each term shall commence on October 1 and end on September 30 of the subsequent year.

- D. The Council shall consist of twenty eight(28) voting members, all of whom shall either reside or be employed in Passaic County, all of whom shall be appointed by the Board of Freeholders and shall serve without compensation. The number of members may be increased, or decreased according to the guidelines set by the Department of Human Services, Freeholder determination or through determination of the Council itself, with County and State approval.
- E. Membership eligibility shall be determined in accordance with guidelines established by the Department of Human Services, with membership slots being so allocated.
- F. The Council shall recommend potential appointees onto its body to the Board of Freeholders. Those recommendations for appointments should proportionately reflect the county's demographic make-up, minority populations, low income population, and geographic distribution. The Council will systematically monitor the Freeholders appointments to the Council and these appointees participation on Council committees.
- G. The Council shall recommend the termination of membership and replacement of a member to the Board of Freeholders for any of the following reasons:
1. A member's personal resignation.
  2. Transfer of one's employment and/or place of residence to a location outside of Passaic County.
  3. Failure to attend three consecutive meetings or at least 50% of the meetings during a twelve month period.
  4. Conviction of a high misdemeanor or felony by a court of law while serving on this Council.
  5. Misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance in carrying out the duties and functions of this Council.
  6. Members under threat of termination shall be so notified by the Council and shall be requested to show cause within thirty (30) days or the next regular meeting why membership termination should not be recommended to the Board of Freeholders. The Council by 2/3 majority vote of the quorum present shall decide whether the termination should be recommended to the Board of Freeholders.

## ARTICLE VI.

MEETINGS

- A. Meetings of the Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council shall be held at a minimum of ten per year with a goal of one per month. The Council shall set its own agenda with due consideration of the priorities set by the Department of Human Services, the Board of Freeholders and itself. The regular meeting in any month may be omitted if so determined by the Council at the previous monthly meeting. If it is definitely ascertained that a quorum will not be available due to inclement weather, the Chairperson shall have the right to cancel a regular meeting.
- B. Meetings shall be held at the Passaic County Administration Building, 317 Pennsylvania Avenue, Paterson, N.J. or at such other places mutually agreed upon by the Council membership and Board of Freeholders and at such times and dates mutually agreed upon.
- C. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson as deemed necessary.
- D. A quorum shall consist of seven (7) voting members on all matters except:
  - 1. Adoption of the needs assessment and plan.
  - 2. Termination of any member.
  - 3. Modification of these by-laws.
  - 4. Election and/or removal of any officer.
  - 5. In these matters, Article VI-D, 1-4, a quorum shall consist of 50% of the voting members currently serving on the Council.
- E. Roberts Rules of Order, as revised, shall be followed unless the Council shall provide otherwise in any particular instance.
- F. All meetings shall be open to, and announced to, the general public and the press in accordance with the "Open Public Meetings Law, P.L. 1975, c.231."
- G. All resolutions and other actions of the Council shall be approved by a majority vote of those present and voting, providing a quorum is present.

## ARTICLE VII.

OFFICERS

- A. The following officers and duties shall be established as the officers of the Passaic County Human Services Advisory Council:

1. Chairperson - who shall call for and preside at all meetings of the Council, prepare agendas for such meetings, appoint all committee members and committee chairpersons, answer or cause to be answered all correspondence and inquiries addressed to the Council, authenticate by signature all acts of business and proceedings of the Council, and perform all other duties required by this office including the appointment of temporary officers in the absence of the regular officer.
  2. Vice Chairperson - who shall act for and in place of the Chairperson in his/her absence or in a capacity assuming all duties specified in VIII-A-1 and who shall assure the maintenance of all membership and attendance records, call the roll as required, and assure that members are selected and terminated in conformance with the By-Laws.
  3. Secretary - who shall record minutes of all meetings, assure the maintenance of all records and correspondence, act for and in place of the Chair or Vice Chair should both be absent, and conduct all other duties required by this office.
  4. Treasurer - who shall assist in the preparation of any budgets, grant requests, or solicitations undertaken by this Council, report on expenditures of any such funds under the recommendation or control of the Council, act for or in place of any absent officer at meetings, and conduct all other duties required of this office.
- B. Officers shall serve terms of office commencing October 1 and ending September 30 of the subsequent year.
- C. Officers shall be nominated from the floor at the regularly scheduled September meeting or by writing one week thereafter. The Chair shall appoint a non-candidate to referee the election. Voting shall take place by secret ballot.
- D. Officers shall be elected at the October meeting under the following procedure:
1. A majority vote of the appropriate quorum.
  2. If after the first vote no candidate receives a majority vote (50% + 1), a second ballot shall be held eliminating the candidate receiving the fewest votes. This procedure shall be followed until a candidate receives a majority vote at the October meeting. If necessary, the vote can be tabled to the next meeting holding over existing officers.

- E. Officers may be removed for any of the following reasons:
1. Ineligibility for Advisory Council membership as specified in Article V-G, 1-6.
  2. Personal resignation from office.
  3. Gross incompetence or failure to carry out duties specified in Article VII-A, 1-4.
  4. Officers under threat of impeachment shall be so notified by the Council and shall be requested to show cause at the next regular meeting of the Council why the officership should not be terminated.
  5. The Council by a 2/3 majority vote of a quorum shall decide whether to terminate the officer.
  6. Election to fill open offices shall be conducted at the earliest possible meeting subsequent to the removal of an officer.

## ARTICLE VIII.

COMMITTEES

- A. The Council shall authorize such standing or temporary committees as shall be deemed necessary for the proper conduct of business.
- B. The Committee Chairperson and members of committees shall be appointed by the Council Chairperson, providing, however, that Council members be encouraged to volunteer for those areas of interest to them.
- C. At least one committee member shall be drawn from the Advisory Council. Additionally, the Council may appoint members from interested Consumers, Providers, Advocates, Funders, and Others in the Passaic County community.
- D. All committees shall have an appointed Chairperson, drawn from the Advisory Council, who shall chair committee meetings with all duties and powers appropriate to such a position.
- E. All committees shall report to the Council the results of their deliberations or actions within any time frame set by the Council.
- F. The Council is authorized to hold an Annual Meeting of all committee and Council members, and interested community members for the purpose of soliciting additional participation and input into the organization and presentation of an Annual Report.

ARTICLE IX. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- A. Members shall not vote on any matter they, their agency or their immediate relatives have a direct personal or appointive interest in.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS, DELETIONS, OR ADDITIONS

- A. These By-Laws may be amended, deleted, or added to by a 2/3 vote of the proper quorum provided that:
1. Due notice and copy of the proposed change is given to each member no less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which it is to be considered.
  2. The comments on any proposed revision from any member unable to attend the meeting is read to those present.

ARTICLE XI. SEPERABILITY AND SAVINGS

- A. If through legislation, resolution, regulation, or order by any agency, board, or court of the County of Passaic, State of New Jersey or United States of America renders any portion of these By-Laws null and void, all other portions of the By-Laws shall remain in force and all prior decisions rendered by the Council shall remain in effect.

PASSAIC COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Visiting Homemaker Service  
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Anna Quinones  
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Paterson, N.J. 07509

*Concerned Parents for Head Start*  
87-99 Clinton Street • Paterson, New Jersey 07522

TELEPHONE: (201) 942-1626/7



FEBRUARY 29, 1984

Assemblyman F. Visotcky  
Vice-Chairman Assembly Corrections, Health  
and Human Services Committee

Mr. Chairman:

Concerned Parents for Head Start in Paterson, New Jersey operates a comprehensive program of early education and child care for 405, four (4) year old children in Paterson, New Jersey. It serves low income families who suffer more than their share of stress caused by inadequate housing, insufficient income, long standing health problems and a variety of problems which contribute to distress.

It is from many of these families that child abuse or the threat of child abuse occurs. As a matter of fact, a number of our children are referred to us from the Division of Youth and Family Services.

We try to provide counseling and supportive services to parents to prevent child abuse to the limited extent that our resources permit.

Therefore we welcome the proposed Assembly Bill 393 "Designated the Child Life Protection Fund Act". We are in agreement with its concepts. Services geared to the prevention of child abuse and neglect are badly needed.

As our agency reviewed the Bill, several concerns came to mind. We would like to pose several questions related to these concerns:

1. How much funding will be available to individual communities?
2. What criteria will be used to establish priorities?

3. What particular types of agencies will be considered appropriate to receive the funds?
4. Are grants to be used only for demonstration grant and pilot programs or will some funding be available to support on-going programs?

We hope that information will be available soon to clarify the questions raised above. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

*Ellen E. Bullock*

Ellen E. Bullock, MSW, ACSW  
Coordinator of Social Services

Concerned Parents for Head Start

EEB/bms



**NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR  
PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE**

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER  
17 Academy Street, Suite 709  
Newark, NJ 07102 (201) 643-3710

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Brenda Byrne

February 10, 1984

The Honorable George J. Otlowski  
Chairman  
Assembly Corrections, Health & Human  
Service Committee  
511 New Brunswick Avenue  
Perth Amboy, New Jersey 08861

Dear Mr. Otlowski:

The New Jersey Chapter of the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse commends your focusing public attention on the Child Life Protection Fund (A393) at a public meeting you have arranged on February 29, 1984 in Paterson.

As you are aware, our organization strongly supports the children's trust fund approach to funding increased child abuse prevention programs, with additional emphasis on community responsibility and development.

The New Jersey Chapter-NCPA has taken a stand in support of A393 (formerly A3756), with recommendations for some modifications we feel could strengthen the effectiveness and acceptance of the bill. We urge your committee's consideration of some changes or modifications in the bill which we suggest after studying the process and content of children's trust funds in fourteen other states. These suggested modifications include the following:

1. Changing the name of the bill to Children's Trust Fund.
2. Adopting a \$20 million ceiling for the Fund, which then would inactivate the income collection process.
3. Changes in the composition of the appointed advisory council to include:
  - a) one member shall be a county prosecutor
  - b) nine public members who shall be persons who are experienced in child welfare and represent private organizations which provide services, or funding for services, to children in this state designated to prevent, identify, or treat child abuse and neglect, and three of whom shall be

The Honorable George J. Otlowski  
February 10, 1984  
Page -2-

appointed by the Governor, three of whom shall be appointed the President of the Senate and three of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly. They should reflect geographic and ethnic diversity.

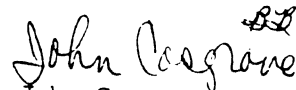
4. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for direct costs associated with the position, including travel, child care expense, etc.
5. ..."funding to be provided as it deems appropriate, except that the Commission shall place particular emphasis on community-based programs and services which are designed to develop and demonstrate strategies for the early identification, intervention and assistance of" families and children at risk in order to prevent child abuse and neglect.

We are looking forward to testifying in support of the bill, with possible revisions as suggested, on February 29. We understand that the Association for Children of New Jersey will do so, as well. Please feel free to contact either of us concerning this landmark legislation. I am enclosing an informative Working Paper on Children's Trust Funds that was just completed by staff of the national office of NCPA.

Thank you for your positive actions on behalf of children and families.

Sincerely yours,

  
Brenda Byrne  
Executive Director

  
John Cosgrove  
Chairman  
Public Policy Committee

BB/JC/sw1

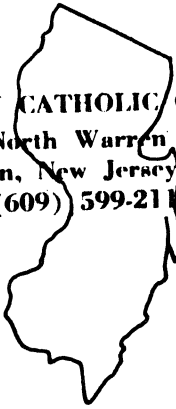
Enclosure

cc: Assemblyman Vincent Pellecchia

**NEW JERSEY CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**  
211 North Warren Street  
Trenton, New Jersey 08618  
(609) 599-2110

Archdiocese of Newark  
Diocese of Camden  
Diocese of Metuchen  
Diocese of Paterson  
Diocese of Trenton  
Eparchy of Passaic

Edward J. Leadem  
Executive Director



Statement on Child Life Protection Fund Act (A.393)

Corrections, Health, and Human Services Committee

New Jersey Assembly

Paterson, New Jersey

February 29, 1984

The incidence of abuse and neglect of children has reached, in many minds, epidemic proportions. It is uncertain whether the incidences have increased or whether the public is being made more aware of them through media attention and a better reporting system. Whichever is the case, it is obvious that a civilized and enlightened society must do whatever is necessary to protect its young, and therefore defenseless citizens, from outright physical and emotional abuse and sometimes off-handed neglect.

Such protection can be provided most beneficially by preventing the occurrence of abuse and neglect. Prevention is possible through programs which help parents and other care-takers to understand the dynamics of child development and to learn ways of controlling their own frustration and impatience so they don't harm children for whom they are responsible. In a society which has placed added stress on these care-takers through unemployment, poverty, substance abuse, and other negative influences, the need for prevention programs is made all the more obvious.

On behalf of the New Jersey Catholic Conference, I should like to express our support for the legislation to establish a Child Life Protection Fund and Commission. The funding of this Commission is made very palatable by the simple check-off system on the state tax return for those eligible for a refund. Certainly, wildlife in the past has received considerable funding through this mechanism and our children deserve nothing less.

While we are in complete support of the Fund and Commission, we should also point out that we recommend that the Child Life Protection Commission be established as an independent agency, similar in concept to the United Way, and not be established in the Department of Human Services. Since the Department is seen primarily as an enforcement agency, it is the belief of the New Jersey Catholic Conference that prevention programs would fare better were they controlled by a private agency.

It is also our considered opinion that the four representatives of agencies to be named as Commission members should be representatives of private and not public agencies since the remainder of the Commission is composed of public officials. If it is deemed necessary to have representatives of public agencies on the Commission, we would suggest that that portion of the Commission's membership be expanded to six members with two public and four private representatives.

Elizabeth A. Holland  
Social Concerns Director



