



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESIDENT, SAVE ABANDONED BABIES

ILLINOIS SAVE HAVEN LAW IMPROVED

(Chicago, IL) July 20, 2010 – Today Governor Quinn signed House Bill 5459, sponsored by Sen. Donne Trotter (D-Chicago) and Rep. Elizabeth Coulson (R-Glenview). The new law replaces the confusing, 14-page packet provided to parents who relinquish their newborn child at a Safe Haven site with three easy-to-read one-page brochures. Under the new law, relinquishing parents will receive information about the Safe Haven Law with a tear-off mailer that allows them to provide important medical information regarding the child, and how to register for the Illinois Adoption Registry. They will also receive a vital health fact sheet with information on post-partum health issues. The new law is effective immediately.

The Illinois Abandoned Newborn Infant Protection Act offers a safe and legal option to unsafe infant abandonment. An unharmed newborn, 30 days old or younger, may legally be relinquished into the hands of personnel at any designated Safe Haven with no questions asked and no fear of prosecution. Illinois Safe Havens include all hospitals, emergency medical care facilities, staffed police stations and staffed fire stations.

Sixty-one babies have been safely and legally relinquished under the Illinois law since it was passed in 2001. "The law is simple and it works," said Dawn Geras, Save Abandoned Babies Foundation founder and president. "Now we have a better chance of learning of the medical history of these babies."

These new brochures will help obtain vital health information about the infant and biological parents. It is hoped that parents who have used the law in the past and relinquished an infant, will also take advantage of these forms, which will be available on the Save Abandoned Babies web site. Parents may remain anonymous.

"Illinois' Safe Haven law has provided sixty-one children with the opportunity for a bright future. However, sixty-one other infants were discarded, and thirty of them did not survive. We still have work to do to raise awareness of the Safe Haven option and ensure that no mother feels stuck in an impossible situation with an unwanted baby."

The Save Abandoned Babies Foundation is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to saving the lives of newborn infants who might otherwise be unsafely abandoned in Illinois. For more information, please visit <http://www.saveabandonedbabies.org/>.

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