

# Safe Havens Save Lives Support of HB 106

## House Bill 106 – Adds Campus Police Departments And State Police As Designated Safe Havens For Newborn Infants

### How Can You Help?

Contact **YOUR** state representatives and ask them to sign on as a Co-Sponsor of HB106 and be a part of this life saving bill!

***Rarely do lawmakers get a chance to write and pass laws that actually save lives.*** Even more rare is legislation that is written to appeal to a desperate parent in crisis. Illinois' "Safe Haven Law" does just that – it provides a safe and legal option to a parent who might otherwise abandon a newborn in a dumpster or other unsafe place.

The Safe Haven Law allows a parent to relinquish an unharmed newborn, 30 days old or younger, to personnel at a *Safe Haven*: a Hospital, Emergency Medical Care Facility, Police or Fire Station, anonymously, with no fear of prosecution for abandonment.

**The law is simple and it works. 64 babies have been safely and legally relinquished** under the Illinois law since it was passed in 2001.

### What Does HB 106 Accomplish?

The Newborn Infant Protection Act currently defines a "police station" as a safe haven; however, the Act narrowly defined "police station" to mean a municipal police station or county sheriff's office. This narrowly drawn definition excludes university police stations and state police and puts newborn infants at risk.

University police departments serve an inexperienced and often immature young adult population where unplanned pregnancies occur. On any campus there is a real possibility of a newborn infant being abandoned to the environment or other unsafe places.

HB 106 will expand the definition of the Act to include campus police stations and state police as a "safe haven" where a desperate parent can bring their newborn.

### Why Should HB 106 Be Passed?

This new law acknowledges that citizens already believe they can go to the police in a time of need. The police motto of "serve and protect" means an infant who might otherwise be abandoned unsafely could be saved. Parents who have abandoned their infants often say they didn't know where they could go, what they could do, and were too ashamed to ask for help. Campus students know where to find their campus police and know they will be offered help there.

Adding this option increases the odds that a newborn infant's life may be saved instead of abandoned in a dumpster or other unsafe condition.

### Who Supports HB 106?

\* Department of Children and Family Services \* University of Illinois Division of Public Safety \*  
\* Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition \* Save Abandoned Babies Foundation \*