



SENATOR
EARLINE S. ROGERS
116TH INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY ★ SENATE DISTRICT 3

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
March 4, 2010

Media Contact:
Peg McLeish, 317-232-9507
Elise Shrock, 317-232-9496

Rogers bill to promote dating violence heading to governor's office

INDIANAPOLIS – Today the Indiana Senate and Indiana House of Representatives gave final approval to legislation that would require the Indiana Department of Education (DOE) to develop or identify model dating violence educational materials and a model for dating violence response policies in Indiana schools. Senate Bill 316, authored by State Senator Earline S. Rogers (D-Gary), was approved by a vote of 45 to 5 in the Senate and a vote of 82 to 14 in the House. Sen. Rogers refers to the bill as “Heather’s Law,” named after a young woman who was physically abused and ultimately murdered by her estranged boyfriend.

The bill would require the Department of Education to include in its guidelines the warning signs of dating violence, the basic principles of dating violence prevention and methods of parental education and outreach. The department’s model dating violence policy would include procedures for reporting incidents of dating violence, guidelines for responding to dating violence, guidelines concerning orders of protection issued on behalf of students and the designation of a prevention coordinator. The curriculum would be designed only for students in grades 6 through 12. The DOE would be required to collaborate with organizations that deal with domestic violence, sexual assault and dating violence.

“I’m glad this legislation moved through the General Assembly this year,” said Rogers. “Dating violence is a serious problem that continues to get worse, and it requires the attention of our educators.”

According to data from Children’s Bureau Inc., one in five teens in a serious relationship report being physically abused by their partner. One in three teens report knowing a friend or peer who has been punched, slapped, choked, or physically hurt by his or her partner. A 2005 study also found that one in five high school girls report having been physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.

The bill now moves to the governor for his signature or veto.

For more information on Sen. Rogers, her legislative agenda or other State Senate business call 1-800-382-9467 or visit www.senatedemocrats.in.gov.

###