

STATE SENATOR • GILDA Z. JACOBS • 14<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

# Jacobs Press Release

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## SEN. JACOBS LAUDS GOVERNOR'S SIGNING OF FOSTER CARE PROTECTIONS

**LANSING-** Sen. Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) today applauded Governor Jennifer M. Granholm's signing of legislation (PA 217) that will strengthen enforcement standards for children's residential and day camp facilities and create a category of residential treatment facilities called "children's therapeutic group homes" to meet Medicaid requirements for children placed in those facilities.

"This new Public Act will not only improve safety protections for children in residential and day camp facilities, but will increase the number of children who qualify for Medicaid coverage," Sen. Jacobs said. "Improving physical safety and expanding insurance coverage make this win-win legislation."

Public Act 217 also establishes a statutory definition of "legal custodian" that allows the family court to place a child in an unlicensed, unrelated home legally if conditions are met that assure the child will be safe. It also amends the definitions of foster family home and foster family group home to include a "legal custodian" as a person who does not need to be licensed.

This package of bills amends the Child Care Licensing Act of 1973 and was introduced at the request of the Department of Human Services. In the Senate several bipartisan workgroups were held with DHS which resulted in widespread bipartisan support for the package.

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*State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Campaign & Election Oversight and the Families & Human Services subcommittee and a member of the Economic*

*Development & Regulatory Reform; Health Policy; and Finance subcommittees.*