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Legislative Coalition to Prevent Child Abuse

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When all is said and done, let each of us know we made a difference in the life of a child.

December, 1998

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for being a part of a successful year for the Legislative Coalition. As a result of your contributions and support, three important bills were passed this year which will protect children and assist victims of abuse.

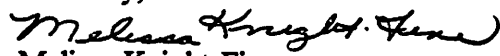
The contacts you made with legislators, and the financial support you gave our Coalition, made it possible to provide \$8 million per year in mental health counseling for crime victims through the Victims of Crime program (AB 535 Brown), and reclaim \$26 million for the Victims Restitution Fund (SB 1311 Lockyer, Peace). This money had previously been moved to the State General Fund, thus making it unavailable to crime victims. Because of your support child sexual abuse victims (up to the age of 26) can now recover damages from individuals and institutions whose actions led to the abuse (AB 1651 Ortiz).

We have more work to do. With your continued support we can protect children who are now placed in the custody of persons who sexually assault them. We can require thorough investigations by trained experts into allegations of child sexual abuse that arise in Family Courts. We can make the new law, which holds third parties accountable for child sexual abuse, apply to existing cases. We can establish standards and funding for Multidisciplinary Teams and Centers, that investigate, prosecute and provide treatment in child abuse cases. We will also work to restructure the Victims of Crime program to better meet the needs of victims and service providers.

As we gather with family and friends, remembering times of joy and thinking of the year ahead, let us remember the children and those who suffered as children. I invite you to contribute to the Legislative Coalition. You will help alleviate suffering. You will make a difference in the life of a child.

May you and your family have a New Year filled with many blessings.

Sincerely,



Melissa Knight-Fine

Director

Legislative information, including the text of bills you helped pass, can be found at www.sen.ca.gov.

Contributions can be made to Legislative Coalition.

For more information, contact us at the above address.