

March 27, 2009

Haddaway and Sossi Donate Cell Phones to Soldiers



(L-R – Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Delegate Susan Aumann and Delegate Richard Sossi)

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio (District 37B – Mid Shore) and Delegate Richard Sossi (District 36 – Upper Shore) donated cell phones to soldiers this week as part of the Cell Phones for Soldiers program. The Cell Phones for Soldiers organization is calling on all Americans to support the 150,000 troops who are serving overseas by donating your unused cell phones. Their goal is to collect over 50,000 cell phones this year to help keep troops connected with their families.

With that in mind, Delegate Susan Aumann (District 42 - Baltimore County) established a collection site in her Annapolis office and called on her legislative colleagues to donate phones. Delegate Richard Sossi and Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio were among the first to donate. “As a Vietnam veteran I well know the value of being able to call home,” said Delegate Sossi. Delegate Haddaway shared his sentiments saying, “I cannot imagine how hard it is for these brave men and women to be away from friends and family for such long periods of time. My heart goes out to them and I hope my contribution will lift someone’s spirits by allowing them to contact their loved ones.”

Cell Phones for Soldiers was founded by teenagers Robbie and Brittany Bergquist from Norwell, Massachusetts. After reading a story about a soldier who ran up a huge phone bill calling home from Iraq, these two teenagers decided to help out. They started by opening an account with \$21.00 of their own money. Since then, the non-profit organization has raised almost \$1 million in donations and distributed more than 500,000 prepaid calling cards to soldiers serving overseas.

Cell Phone Donations on the Eastern Shore can be delivered to Liberty Tax Service in Easton, Maryland. For more information, contact Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio at (410) 841-3429 or Delegate Richard Sossi at (410) 841-3543. You can also visit the Cell Phones for Soldiers web site at www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com

Haddaway Introduces “Buy Local” Legislation

Eggs at Farmers’ Markets

A hearing was held this week on a bill introduced by Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio that would make it easier for farmers to sell eggs at farmers’ markets. Haddaway testified before the Health and Government Operations Committee on Wednesday and explained that farmers who want to participate in farmers’ markets in more than one county have to comply with different regulations in each of those counties. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene have regulations that must be complied with. House Bill 1542 would streamline the process so that only one set of regulations would apply. The issue was brought to her attention by a Wicomico County farmer that lives in her district.

Farmstead Cheese Pilot Program

Under current Maryland law, raw milk cheese can be bought, sold and consumed in Maryland, but cannot be produced in the state. This has caused many dairy farmers to haul their milk to Pennsylvania and other border states for processing. Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio initiated a pilot program a few years ago that would allow one farm in Talbot County to produce raw milk cheese. Last year, the pilot program was expanded to five farms in Maryland. However, because the pilot program includes a sunset date, many farmers were having difficulty getting loans to start their operation. As amended, House Bill 243 would remove the sunset date and allow five farms with less than 100 cows or goats to participate in the pilot program. The bill received a favorable report from the Health and Government Operations Committee this week. Anyone interested in participating should contact Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio or the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Salvia Divinorum

Salvia divinorum is a psychoactive herb that is being used as a recreational drug because of its hallucinogenic properties. The herb can be smoked or ingested and is considered by many to be stronger than LSD. Although this drug has serious negative consequences, it is widely available on the Internet, in retail shops and (in our area) along the boardwalk in Ocean City. Web sites and You-Tube videos have increased its popularity among young people causing concern among public health officials and law enforcement officials. Several countries and states have banned its use including Australia, Spain, Italy, Sweden and Delaware, Missouri, California and Louisiana.

Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio introduced legislation to ban *Salvia divinorum* in Maryland by adding it to the Controlled Dangerous Substances list. Instead of an outright ban, the House Judiciary Committee combined Delegate Haddaway’s bill with a similar bill and amended it to ban sales to individuals under 21 years of age. The full House of Delegates will vote on the measure later this week.

Haddaway Bills Moving in the General Assembly

- House Bill 8 – Ban on Salvia – combined with HB1261, amended, passed in House Judiciary Committee
- House Bill 42 – Property Tax Credit for Habitat for Humanity – passed unanimously in the House; Senate Bill approved in the senate
- House Bill 43 – Talbot County School Buses – passed unanimously in the House; Senate Bill approved by the Senate
- House Bill 105 – Talbot County Wineries – passed unanimously in the House; pending Senate approval
- House Bill 243 – Farmstead Cheese Pilot Programs – passed by Health and Government Operations Committee; on second reader in the House this week
- House Bill 452 – Audits of Charitable Organizations – passed unanimously in the House; Senate Bill approved by the Senate
- House Bill 798 – Foreclosures – passed on Second Reader in the House; pending final House approval on third reader this week

For more information on this and other issues, please feel free to contact Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio's office by calling (410) 841-3429 or by emailing jeannie.haddaway@house.state.md.us.