

March 20, 2009

Haddaway Takes Red Cross Pledge



(Annapolis, MD) – This week, Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and Delegate Addie Eckardt both signed pledges to be “Red Cross ready” and to help others in their community prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

By signing the pledge, the two delegates also agreed to provide information to their constituents on having an emergency preparedness kit, creating a family plan for emergencies, getting trained in First Aid and CPR and how to get involved with Red Cross activities. “I applaud the Red Cross volunteers around the state and on the shore for their ongoing commitment to readiness as we recognize March as American Red Cross month,” said Delegate Addie Eckardt. “We all need to be aware and be prepared for emergencies that could occur in our community. Everyone can participate so get a kit, make a plan and be informed.”

The two delegates have been helping in other ways as well. They have both appeared in the annual Concours d’Elegance fashion show in St. Michaels which benefits the American Red Cross of the Delmarva Peninsula. Two modeled clothes and jewelry from the Charisma and Bliss shops which are located in St. Michaels. This year’s event is scheduled for September 25-27, 2009 at the Inn at Perry Cabin.

“I am pleased to support the American Red Cross in their efforts to help Maryland citizens,” Haddaway said. “I am also very proud of our local group, American Red Cross of the Delmarva Peninsula. They have served over 1 million people on the Eastern Shore and in Delaware for over 100 years. What an incredible legacy.”

Haddaway and Eckardt advise everyone to put together an emergency kit that includes items such as bottled water, nonperishable food, flashlights, batteries and copies of important information. Families should also make a plan for emergencies by selecting two meeting places – one right outside your home and one outside of your neighborhood in case you cannot reach your home. The Delegates are also encouraging constituents to enroll in First Aid and CPR/AED courses or renew their certification if it is expired. For more information, you can contact Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio at (410) 841-3429 or Delegate Eckardt at (410) 841-3343 or visit www.redcross.org.

House Hearing Held on Resident Delegate Bill

A hearing was held this week on a bill that would amend Maryland's constitution to try to provide every county a resident delegate. Currently, Caroline County is the only county in the State that does not have a resident representative. Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, the lead sponsor of the bill, called it an issue of fairness and in testimony told the House Rules Committee that having a resident delegate is "a fundamental principle of representative democracy". She also added that with an election and a census coming up, this is a good time to pass the bill. Delegate Michael Smigiel and Delegate Dick Sossi, who are cosponsors of the legislation, also testified in favor of the bill.

The concept has broad bipartisan support in Caroline County. Representatives of both the Republican and Democrat Central Committees spoke in support as well as two Caroline County Commissioners. No one testified in opposition.

Privatizing Medevac Helicopters Bad For Rural Maryland

A hearing was held last week on Senate Bill 649 which would privatize Maryland's medevac services. Volunteer fire fighters and rural legislators such as Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio are opposing the bill for fear that it would have negative impacts on rural areas of the State. Under the current system, the Maryland State Police transport approximately 11,000 patients each year. About 5,000 of those patients are flown to trauma centers. Private air ambulance companies are used as a back up. Under the proposed system in Senate Bill 649, all of the transports would be privatized. "My primary concern is that private companies will focus on regions with a concentration of population because that is where they will make the most money," Haddaway said. "That will leave rural residents without access to emergency care and trauma care at a time when every second counts." The bill is in the Senate Finance Committee pending a vote.

Unemployment for Part Time Workers Moves Forward

Unemployment benefits may now be extended to part time workers. The House Economic Matters Committee voted favorable with amendments on House Bill 310 yesterday. While the bill originally defined part time workers as those who work 15 hours per week, it was amended to say 20 hours per week. Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio voted against it in committee citing recent increases in unemployment insurance rates with more increases on the horizon. "The State raised unemployment insurance rates last September and today the House will be voting on a bill to increase the maximum benefit, which will also cause an increase in rates," Haddaway said. "Extending it to part time workers will increase rates even more and we are already being told to expect another increase this September. The combination of these actions will ultimately result in fewer

jobs in the State because small businesses simply will not be able to afford employees.”

Coming Up Next Week in the Economic Matters Committee

- Real Estate Licensees – Services Provided Through Teams
- Crane Operators – Certificates of Competence
- Maryland Electricity Re-regulation
- Linked Deposit Program – Loans to Minority Business Enterprises
- Indoor Smoking Prohibition

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.