

## **Paige Victoria Perry Act**

When my granddaughter, Paige Victoria Perry passed away unexpectedly in 2006, the grief and loss for my entire family was indescribable. In the months that followed I heard from many others who had suffered similar devastating losses who shared their own unique stories. The more people I spoke with who had lost a child to SIDS, the more concerned I became that we as a government and society were not always responding to such losses in a consistent, thoughtful and compassionate manner. On a personal note, I need to say that law enforcement, EMS personnel, Cape Cod Hospital, the SIDS Center and society treated my family very well.

After allowing some time for my own grief to wane and after conducting research as to how other states were responding to the issues of SIDS, I decided to file a legislative proposal to create an advisory council. I am pleased that with the support of my colleagues in the House of Representatives and Senate, Governor Patrick recently signed into law the Paige Victoria Perry Act.

While the new law has many elements to it, the primary goal is to bring together all of the groups who respond when someone loses a child suddenly. It is my hope that this new council will work towards improving the consistency of training to first responders, protocols for the medical examiners and an expansion of the social services provided to the families who suffer a loss of a child.

The Massachusetts SIDS Center is an important part of the response families need when they suffer the loss of a child. For me and my family, words cannot express how grateful we are for the care and compassion they offered us. Working together with this new advisory council, I am hopeful we can as a state ensure that each and every family who bears the pain of losing a child is treated with respect and compassion and has access to social services.

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