



News From  
**State Representative Randy Ramey**

For Immediate Release  
February 18, 2010

Contact: Rep. Randy Ramey  
(630) 876-0703

**Ramey: Committee Approves Victims Rights Legislation**

Springfield...An Illinois House committee, on Thursday, February 18, approved legislation to extend the rights of victims by allowing victim impact statements to be reviewed and considered when determining the placement of a defendant found not guilty of an offense by reason of insanity, according to state Rep. Randy Ramey (R-Carol Stream), the chief sponsor of the bill.

“This legislation arose out of a situation in which a defendant was found not guilty of the murder by reason of insanity,” said Ramey. “The defendant was then housed at a Department of Human Services (DHS) facility in close proximity to the surviving family members of the victim, creating a frequent painful reminder to the family of the loss of their loved one. This bill would allow DHS to review victim impact statements and consider, among other things, the proximity of a facility to surviving victims when evaluating a defendant for placement.”

Specifically, House Bill 4807 provides that after a defendant is found not guilty by reason of insanity, any victim impact statement prepared under the Rights of Crime Victims and Witnesses Act shall be sent to DHS. The individualized placement evaluations by DHS determine the most appropriate setting for treatment based upon a number of factors including mental health diagnosis, proximity to surviving victims, security need, age, gender, and proximity to family.

According to Ramey, current law is silent as to what factors may be considered by DHS in evaluating the most appropriate setting for the defendant’s treatment.

“This bill gives DHS the authority to take into consideration the proximity of the defendant to the surviving family members of the victim, which is something current law did not address,” said Ramey. “It’s a commonsense gesture the state can make to help ease the pain of the surviving family members.”

Having passed committee the bill now heads to the House floor for full debate.

###