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ASSEMBLY APPROVES GREENWALD/FISHER BILL TO EDUCATE PARENTS ON SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME

(TRENTON) – The Assembly today voted 77-0 to approve legislation Assembly members Louis D. Greenwald and Douglas H. Fisher sponsored to require the state include information about Shaken Baby Syndrome to new parents.

“All new parents need to be absolutely aware of how devastating this syndrome can be,” said Greenwald (D-Camden). “Learning about Shaken Baby Syndrome will hopefully prevent parents from harming their babies.”

According to the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, 1,200 to 1,400 children nationwide annually receive medical treatment for injuries attributed to being violently shaken by a caregiver.

Nearly 30 percent of those injuries prove fatal, and about 80 percent of survivors incur lifelong brain injuries that can lead to learning and physical disabilities, blindness, hearing and speech disabilities, cerebral palsy and behavior disorders.

The legislation (A-725) would require the state to include information on Shaken Baby Syndrome in the resource guide it provides to new parents. The guide also would be published in Spanish. A health care professional would be required to review information in the guide with new parents as part of the discharge procedure.

“Bringing in a health professional to reinforce and make certain that new parents understand what Shaken Baby Syndrome is, how it can be brought about and what it can do to their baby ultimately will save lives,” said Fisher (D-Cumberland). “This will protect innocent newborns.”

The bill now goes to the Senate for further consideration..

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