

The Packet - News

Bill C-464 becomes law

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Scott Andrews, Member of Parliament for the Riding of Avalon, is elated his first-ever Private Member's Bill received Royal Assent this afternoon in Ottawa. The Bill stemmed from the unforgettable tragedies that resulted in the deaths of Dr. Andrew Bagby and later his infant son, Zachary Turner. M.P. Scott Andrews first introduced Bill C-464 in the House of Commons on October 23, 2009. The Bill was sponsored in the Senate by Senator Tommy Banks.

"After meeting David and Kate Bagby for the first time, they instilled in me the need to influence a legislative change to protect children from those that have committed serious offences. From the tragic loss of their son and grandson, they continue to work tirelessly to seek legislative change that will help reduce the possibility of a similar tragedy happening to another family," said Andrews. "I also want to thank Senator Banks for his commitment to having Bill C-464 approved through the Senate. Without his dedication, we would not have achieved success."

David Bagby said, "After Zachary's murder, Kate and I set out to get bail law changed so that an atrocity like that couldn't happen again. Thanks mainly to Kurt's film 'Dear Zachary', a lot of folks became aware of the problem, and many of them told their political representatives. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Andrews and Senator Banks for taking up the issue and doing the practical work needed to create this bail reform bill and usher it through the legislative process. We're anxious to see how it is applied in court, and have high hopes that prosecutors and judges put it to effective use in preventing another dead baby."

"I consider this a significant personal achievement as I am the first Member of Parliament from Newfoundland to achieve Royal Assent of a Private Member's Bill," Andrews added. "This Bill will now amend the Criminal Code of Canada. I could have introduced a Bill simply to make a political statement, however I worked through the legislative process to really make a difference that will hopefully protect some of the most vulnerable in our society. I now join with David and Kate and await the reflection of this Amendment in our court system."

Since 2001, some 2,510 Private Member's Bills have been introduced in the House of Commons. Only 23 of these Bills have received Royal Assent.