Termination of Parental Rights of Convicted Rapists

A proposed Pennsylvania law would strengthen the rights of rape victims who have a child as a result of a rape.

Proposed Law:
The proposed law would allow for courts to terminate the parental rights of a convicted rapist, eliminating the abuser’s access to full, partial or supervised custody of a child conceived by rape.

- The measure would maintain an offender’s obligation to pay child support even if parental rights are terminated by court order.

Current Law:
Current Pennsylvania law only allows for the termination of parental rights of convicted rapists pending adoption.

- If parental rights are terminated, the obligation to pay child support is also terminated under current law.

For more information about the statute or issues to keep in mind when discussing with clients, please contact PCAR’s Legal Director, Diane Moyer at dmoyer@pcar.org.

If a victim of rape decides to keep a child that was conceived as a result of rape, she could be forced under current state law to interact with the perpetrator on a regular basis if he demands visitation rights. She would be repeatedly subjected to enduring the pain and reliving the trauma that was inflicted on her.

It is time for Pennsylvania legislators to close the loophole and protect the parental rights of rape victims.