



pennsylvania

OFFICE OF VICTIM ADVOCATE

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September 18, 2019

In Response to Child Pornography Charges Against Senator Michael Folmer

Harrisburg, PA – On Tuesday, September 17, the Pennsylvania Attorney General filed charges against Senator Michael Folmer for Sexual Abuse of Children – Possession of Child Pornography and Criminal Use of a Communications Facility.

We applaud the steadfast leadership of the Senate in swiftly removing Folmer from his seat as Chairman of the Senate State Government Committee, and we echo Governor Wolf's call for his full resignation in the wake of these repugnant crimes. Viewing and possessing pornographic images of children is not only exploitation of that child, it also makes the viewer an accessory to the sexual abuse that child endured. We cannot turn a blind eye to the horrific abuse children suffer at the hands of those who create videos and pictures of these crimes; those who knowingly download them and share them must be held equally responsible for the ongoing trauma and harm that child endures as a result. Children cannot consent to sexual activity, and the long-term psychological effects of these crimes are staggering and impact ones entire life.

While Folmer moves through the criminal justice process, he is rightfully afforded due process. This process should be engaged privately and without the use of official resources associated with his role as a state senator. Folmer's presence in the Capitol would be a distraction from his official duties to represent the people of his district, and his accused conduct violates the very oath he took to uphold the Constitution of our Commonwealth. Under the current circumstances, a resignation is in the best interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Anyone coming in contact with child pornography or noticing suspicious internet activity is urged to turn images over to law enforcement immediately or utilize the PA Office of Attorney General's child predator tip line at 800.385.1044.

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