

## January 2012 is Proclaimed as Stalker Awareness Month

Written by The Office of the Commissioners  
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Armstrong County Commissioners signed a proclamation supporting January 2012 as National Stalker Awareness Month while recognizing efforts by HAVIN in dealing with cases of stalking here.

Jo Ellen Bowman, the Executive Director of HAVIN accepted the proclamation for the organization and welcomed the new Board of Commissioners, expressing her appreciation of the community for the Board's continued support of HAVIN and the programs it offers.

left to right: Commissioner Robert Bower, Commissioner David Battaglia, Executive Director of HAVIN, Jo Ellen Bowman and Commissioner Rich Fink

Statistics provided by HAVIN reveal that one in 12 women and 1 in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetimes. Stalking victims often suffer severe emotional stress, which leads to a multitude of other health issues, causes loss of work and quality of life.

Bowman said some victims have had to make complete identity and life changes to avoid their stalkers, adding that modern technology makes it easier for stalkers to track their victims; global positioning systems, cameras and computer spyware are just a few methods.

Commissioner Robert Bower commended the volunteers and employees at HAVIN. "Their work often goes unrecognized out of a need for security and protection."

Commission Chairman Dave Battaglia agreed: "They are heroes unsung, plain and simple," he said.

HAVIN, Armstrong County law enforcement and the District Attorney provide services and

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interventions for stalking victims; unfortunately many times the crime goes unidentified.

As a result, Bowman said, there is a continuing need to enhance the criminal justice system's response to stalking and stalking victims, including aggressive investigation and prosecution.

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