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Good evening, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry for the confusion. We're about to set up our third consent calendar for the evening, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that -- I would like to move the following items to the Consent Calendar, all of which are in concurrence with the Senate.

Senate Bill 293, House Calendar Number 539 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar Number 321; Calendar 486 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 542 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 540 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 507 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 411 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 472 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 314; Calendar 132 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 116 as amended by Senate "A"; Calendar 541 as amended by Senate "A" and Senate "B".

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Aresimowicz, I believe that a couple of the bills that you called were actually Senate calendar numbers, not House calendar numbers. So I believe the Clerk knows what you're intending, he

may -- with your indulgence, I was going to ask him to, perhaps, offer the correction.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Mr. Speaker, maybe for clarification, I'll go through the bill numbers very quickly.

It being Senate Bill 29 --

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

Mr. Speaker -- excuse me, Mr. Speaker. Is this the appropriate time for one to object to all the items on the Consent Calendar?

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

It would be.

REP. CAFERO (142nd):

I will object to all the items on the Consent Calendar. I would respectfully request that we talk.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you, sir.

With that objection, we will suspend action on the Consent Calendar so that the Minority and Majority Leader may talk.

[Pause.]

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I -- just to clarify, I'm going to run through the bill number and the calendar number.

It would be Senate Bill 293, which is Calendar 545; Senate Bill 429, which is Calendar 539; Senate Bill 115, which is Calendar 321; Senate Bill 203, which is Calendar 486; Senate Bill 71, which is Calendar 542; Senate Bill 447, which is Calendar 540; Senate Bill 61, which is Calendar 507; Senate Bill 75, which is Calendar 411; Senate Bill 321, which is Calendar 472; Senate Bill 66, which is Calendar 314; Senate Bill 178, which is Calendar 495; Senate Bill 430, which is Calendar Number 489; and Senate Bill 425, which is Calendar 51 -- 541.

And I move adoption of the Consent Calendar.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Mr. Clerk, does that match your listing of the calendar numbers?

THE CLERK:

430, Mr. Majority Leader, Senate Bill 430 is calendar what?

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

489.

THE CLERK:

Yes. It does, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

And, Mr. Majority Leader, could you also indicate -- I'm sorry to have to delay this for a second, but according to my notes, all of those -- well, most of those are adopted -- or amended by Senate "A"? If you could just --

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Correct, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

specify --

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Except the first and the last, sir. The last one being Senate "A" and "B," sir.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Thank you. As long as we're clear about the amendments that have been adopted in the Senate.

REP. ARESIMOWICZ (30th):

Correct, Mr. Speaker. And I move passage of the bills on today's Consent Calendar Number 3.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The question before the Chamber is adoption of the Consent Calendar Number 3?

Staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House is voting on Consent Calendar Number 3. The House is voting by roll. Will members please return to the chamber immediately.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted?

Take your time, Representative Boukus.

Would members please check the board to make sure your vote is properly cast. If all the members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

Consent number -- Consent Calendar Number 3

Total Number Voting	147
Necessary for Passage	74
Those voting Yea	147
Those voting Nay	0
Those absent and not voting	4

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

The Consent Calendar is passed.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar 506?

THE CLERK:

Calendar 506, on page 25, favorable report of the joint standing committee on Appropriations. Senate Bill 55, AN ACT CONCERNING COMPLAINTS THAT ALLEGED MISCONDUCT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PERSONNEL.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Representative Fox.

REP. FOX (146th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for the acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Question's on acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark, sir?

REP. FOX (146th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Clerk has an amendment, LCO Number 4583. I'd ask that it be called, and I be allowed to summarize.

SPEAKER SHARKEY:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 4583, which has been previously designated Senate Amendment "A."

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THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Will you remark? Will you remark? If not, Senator Coleman.

SENATOR COLEMAN:

Madam President, if there are no further comments to be made and if there's no objection, I would move the bill to the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 30, Calendar 51, substitute for Senate Bill Number 43, AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY STATUTES.

THE CHAIR:

Senator -- Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

If that item might be passed temporarily and if the Clerk would call as the next item Calendar page 30, Calendar 53, Senate Bill 203.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 30, Calendar 53, substitute for Senate Bill Number 203, AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM. There are amendments.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo. Good evening, ma'am.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Good evening, Madam President.

Madam President, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and I urge passage of the bill, please.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on acceptance and passage. Will you remark?

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Yes. Thank you, Madam President.

The Clerk is in possession of an amendment, LCO Number 4540, and may the Clerk please call that amendment and I be given leave to summarize.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 4540, Senate "A", offered by Senators Osten and Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Madam President, I move adoption of this amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Motion is on adoption. Will you remark?

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Yes, please. Thank you very much, Madam President.

This particular bill, which is a statewide sexual abuse and assault awareness program, is actually

referred to as Erin's Law in a number of other states. And it is established on curriculum that helps children to understand and avoid and detect sexual abuse and assault.

It's actually passed in 12 states and it's been introduced in Connecticut in addition to 24 other.

The amendment actually is a -- is a strike all, so it becomes the bill. So I'd like to give a little bit of information on the amendment itself.

We actually do what's called stranger danger teaching in our schools currently and have actually since, I recall, as I was a child. But the fact is that 93 percent of childhood sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone that the child knows.

And because they know that person, they're often reluctant to report it. And every six minutes, a child is sexually assaulted in the United States and that would be one of four girls and one of six boys before the age of 18.

We do often teach our children about fire drills and tornado drills, bus drills, et cetera, but we do not teach them currently how to recognize unwanted sexual abuse and assault. So this particular amendment, which, again, I said would become the bill, would by July 1 of 2015, have DCF in combination with SDE and CONNSACS, or similar entity, identify or develop a sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program.

And this would be implemented by our local and regional school districts. The program is age-appropriate and there are different components for teachers, such as training on prevention, identification, response, and has a variety of resources that would be for students and teachers and parents for awareness and prevention.

There's also components for student, which would be age-appropriate educational materials for grades K through 12. And these materials would be to allow them to recognize -- skills to recognize abuse and

assault and strategies to disclose the abuse and assault.

There is also a uniform response policy and reporting procedures that would be followed and the students also may be exempted from this curriculum if they have written notification from parents or guardians. And if the student is exempted, then they would have other academic work to be done during the period where this curriculum is being taught.

So again, it has passed 12 states and it's introduced in Connecticut as well as 24 other states. And if I might allow Senator Osten, if I could yield to her, that would be appreciated.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Osten, will you accept the yield, ma'am?

SENATOR OSTEN:

Yes, Madam President. And I'm honored to accept that yield from Senator Bartolomeo.

This bill referred to as Erin's -- Erin's Law as -- as Senator -- Senator Bartolomeo said, passed in 12 states, and is pending in another 24 besides Connecticut. In addition to that, Erin Merryn, who I happened to meet right after I got elected, who was championing this cause around the country, is bringing this bill and is and -- and this concept to other countries.

She will be in Canada in another week, while she is eight months pregnant, and she will -- she will shortly thereafter, in September, once the baby is born and she is able to move around with a young infant, go to Australia in September to bring this concept.

Because we know sexual abuse and sexual abuse prevention is not something that's needed just in the United States. It's needed across the world. So Erin has made it a commitment to see it pass not only in -- in every state in the Union, but in -- in the -- in as much of the world as she can reach.

She's a courageous young woman who was raped by family members at -- under the -- preadolescence. And people think that that's not something that happens, but it happens all the time. 65 percent of all female inmates are raped preadolescence. Almost all of them by someone they know, not by a stranger.

So the stranger danger mechanism works, but it is only a piece of the puzzle, and this will provide another piece to the puzzle.

My own family member was molested before she was 13 and I learned the hard way that it's the people that you trust that take advantage of our young innocent children.

I like the fact that this bill allows an opt-out for parents who choose not to provide this education, but I'm honored to bring this forward and I hope to see it pass this year.

I went down to Monroe and I was hoping that Senator Kane would stop out, but I know she had a constituent who had a similar horrible story by a neighbor. And I think this bill will provide a mechanism for our children to know that if someone is touching them in an inappropriate manner or requiring them to keep a secret that is -- that is unsafe, that they'll be able to go to someone and speak on it.

I am thrilled and honored to be able to present this piece of legislation here today. Thank you very much, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you. Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

So with that thorough explanation, I would urge passage of the amendment, please.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark?

Senator Linares. Good evening, sir.

SENATOR LINARES:

Good evening, Madam President. Thank you, Madam President.

This is a very important issue and it's a sensitive issue. It's -- it's hard to imagine something this grotesque happening in our society, but it does happen. And I'd like to thank Senator Osten for bringing this to our attention in the Children's Committee.

It's an important issue, not only locally and not only across our state and nationally, but internationally. The average age of a teen that enters the sex trade in the U.S. is 12 to 14 years old. And many victims are runaway girls who were sexually abused as children.

And human trafficking is the third largest international crime industry in the world. It generates $32 billion of profit every year.

So this is not a -- a local issue, but an international issue, and it's a very important issue.

This bill requires, as amended, that DCF and the Department of Education and Social Services, and Connecticut Sexual Assault and Crisis Service, incorporated, will have to come up with a statewide sexual abuse awareness program to -- for the use of any regional or local school.

And there is -- there has been a lot of talk lately with Common Core and -- and the new testing on top down approaches to education. So I -- I'd like to ask the proponent of the bill a few questions, if I may, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Please proceed, sir.

SENATOR LINARES:

I'd like to ask Senator Bartolomeo if best practices by municipalities and regional school districts will be considered by the Department of Education, DCF, and social services, and the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you, Madam President.

And through you, if I might -- are you referring a particular section when you say best practices, Senator?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Best practices that are currently used by local school systems that might already be ahead of the curve here. Is -- is the Department of Education -- is -- is this board going to be reaching out to -- to local school districts that -- that might already be doing this to get information on the program? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you, Madam President.

And Madam President, through you, it says here that they can either develop or identify. So certainly, the context, especially, is well versed in this area. There are curriculums that have already been developed through the other states that have implemented Erin's

Law. And so I suspect they have many resources available to them. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Thank you, Madam President.

Thank you, Senator. Because I think it is important that we -- we reach out to our local school districts to -- to understand that, you know, they -- they have some ideas that can help us on this issue.

One of the concerns that I have been hearing from school districts is on the implementation of this -- of this program. And because it is -- it is very -- it is broad in the bill that it does say that it requires the program to provide instructional modules for teachers and that they be age-appropriate.

So I -- I just wanted to ask the proponent of the bill how this will be implemented. Will this be a class that students will take? Will it be a homework assignment, a project, a pamphlet? How are -- what are the materials that our students will be receiving to educate them and making them more aware on this issue? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you. Through you, Madam President, that would be something that would be developed by these agencies working in collaboration. So I cannot speak to exactly what they would choose. It -- it does say very clearly in here that what they may include, but not be limited to, and it lists a variety of types of training and materials.

But that would be the purpose for these CONNSACS and SDE and DCF working in collaboration to either

identify a program that they are all comfortable with or to develop on. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Thank you, Madam President.

Thank you, Senator. I -- I do have a question about the age appropriate educational materials from grades two through five. Obviously, when you're talking about something like this, it's very difficult to make it age appropriate.

However, I -- I do think it is very important to -- to make students aware of these issues. So how -- how do you envision and how might this board be able to communicate to a -- a student that is in second grade the issues involved in -- in sexual awareness when they're -- when they're so young and so innocent? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you, Madam President.

And through you, just to clarify for the good Senator, we have on this particular version, LCO 4540, I just want to make sure that it is understood that we have amended the grades two through five to K through 12. So just to clarify that.

And certainly, at that younger age, I have actually met with Erin Merryn myself, and she does a very good job of talking to them about areas under your bathing suit as being inappropriate. And so that's one example of how she would have -- we would be able to make that age appropriate. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Thank you, Senator. I have also -- I -- I would like to ask if will local and regional boards of ed that are already in compliance to this, but might have a few issues with, you know, a -- a few differences in how they do it in the program, that the -- this board will like -- would like to implement, would they have to change in order to comply or do they already qualify if they're already providing instructions on sexual awareness? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Through you, Madam President, I'm actually not aware of any -- any that currently do. And -- and when the good Senator used the word in compliance, we -- we have yet to have a law regarding this. So, number one, I'm not aware of anyone that would be in compliance because it wasn't in existence. But number two, I'm not aware of any districts that actually have a program such as this. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Well, thank you for answering my question, Senator.

Now, in -- in this bill it does mention that educational resources to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in school be provided. Can you elaborate or -- or walk us through what type of resources we're talking about here, where those resources might come from, and how a school board can help a student that -- that may have been sexually assaulted? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you. Through you, Madam President, if I could just clarify. What Lines are you referring to, sir?

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Line -- oh, thank you. Line 28, access to educational resources to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in school.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you, Madam President.

So -- so this section is actually referring to what the policy would be. So the response policy and the reporting procedures. And that's something that would have to be developed through the Committee or the -- the collaboration of the agencies, I should say.

So the process would be that SDE and DCF and CONNSACS or another agency that works in this area would develop a awareness and prevention program. They would develop certain modules and materials for the teachers. They would also develop materials for the students and the parents.

And then, the part that you were referring to would actually be how to -- what the policy would be to report and to respond to. So I -- I have to say that that would follow after the passage of this legislation and the convening of those bodies. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Thank you, Senator. And -- and moving along in the bill, it does mention that there is a straightforward opt-out for parents that don't want their child to participate in this program. And I can certainly understand if that be the case, especially if you're talking about children that are in kindergarten.

So in the event that a student does want to opt out or the parents want the student to opt out, it -- this bill -- it mentions that the student would have to participate in -- in some type of education program.

Does that mean, Senator, that the student will have to take home -- or do you envision that the student will have to take home a homework assignment to work with their parents on awareness of sexual abuse and assault or is this just the student will take or go -- go ahead and -- and do something else in -- in the educational curriculum? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Through you, Madam President, it does not specify in the language that there would need to be -- this particular curriculum would not be implemented in another way. It simply says that during that time, the student would have an opportunity to do other academic work or other study. And it does not specify that -- what that would be.

I would assume that it would certainly not be something related to this topic because the parent would have chosen that they didn't want their child exposed to this topic and this conversation. So therefore, it would be other academic work. Thank you. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Thank you. Thank you, Senator. One -- one last question. Is there any estimation of how much this might cost a school district on average to -- to implement a program like this? Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Sure. Thank you, Madam President.

Through you, actually, this particular amendment and version does not have a new fiscal note on it. So the previous would have been less than $1,000 per district, and that would certainly be related to the materials. Through you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Linares.

SENATOR LINARES:

Thank you, Madam President.

Thank you, Senator, for answering my questions. I -- I do think this is a very important issue and that one good first step to solving an issue like this is to raise awareness. And -- and I think that that's what this does.

I would -- I would ask that when the board does come up with further recommendations, that they do take into consideration the budgets of local school boards and, at the same time, work with local school boards to provide the best practices that they might already have if they do find out that there are some.

But I -- I do think that this a -- that this a well intentioned bill and I -- I think that it's a very important issue. It's a sensitive issue and it's sad, quite frankly. It's sad that we have to discuss something like this, but it is important. And sexual abuse amongst our children should not be taking place and this is a good step moving forward to preventing that in the future.

So I will be supporting this bill. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark? Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS:

Thank you, Madam President.

Rising in support of the bill. You know, as a -- a former law enforcement officer, I was a detective for a number of years and I -- I had -- part of my task was to investigate child sexual assault cases.

And they truly are very delicate situations, not only from the victims' perspectives, oftentimes, they don't know what happened to them, but more so to the families and those around them, whether it be an educator, a counselor, or anybody that -- from an adult's perspective or -- or other siblings that are a little bit older.

One of the things that I -- I would like if the -- these three agencies, as they collaborate to move the bill forward, that they think about the other part that I think is missing from the bill, and that is the investigative portion of -- of doing that.

Because it speaks of how, you know, you can -- from a teacher's perspective, programs that you can do for intervention and getting assistance.

But we in -- in my department, many departments, I know use a -- a multidisciplinary team approach. So we have experts that are involved for the -- the best wellbeing and output for the children. And one -- one

forensic interview is done, because you don't want to put these child through more than one because that -- that -- you're revictimizing these kids basically.

And so I hope they think about that as they develop these regulations and maybe consult with somebody from law enforcement to say let's incorporate some of the things that you'll be looking for. What are your practices?

Because ultimately, you want to bring somebody who did this nefarious crime to court, make them spend their day in court, and punish them for the things that they did.

So you -- you don't want to revictimize the child, but you want to make sure that you have obtained the necessary evidence to move the case forward.

So I -- I -- as I think about that and I -- I do have in -- in the three agencies that are -- are responsible for developing the guidelines. But they keep that in the back of their minds and they consult maybe with Post or somebody as they develop those guidelines.

The only question I do have concerns about, but not enough to vote against the bill, would be that while we are asking this to be implemented into the curriculum, K through 12, would it be an additional time spent or would it be part of the health curriculum?

I'm hoping it's part of the health curriculum because I know I hear from my teachers saying, listen, don't add -- ask us to do another thing because we don't have enough time to do what we have.

So I'm hoping this is in complement. You know, they can find the time within the designated health curriculum hours that they're already required to do. Again, hopefully the state Department of Education reads through our testimony and -- and sees that.

And lastly, I did have a concern about while parents have the right to opt their child out, there's no requirement in the bill that requires notification

that this is going to be done. So the school could begin the instruction period and a parent may not know that that's taking place.

So I'm hoping when they do the regulations, that they take it upon themselves to notify the parents that we're going to be doing a -- a sexual assault, abuse, awareness program and you do have an opt-out availability so parents, if they want to make that decision, they knew ahead of time before it's taking place. So they don't have to hear it, you know, after the fact or in the middle of it.

So with that, I'm going to support the bill, Madam President. I think it's -- it's a good bill. Thank you.

THE CHAIR:

Thank you.

Will you remark? Will you remark?

If not, we'll try your minds on Senate "A". All those in favor, please say Aye.

SENATORS:

Aye.

THE CHAIR:

Opposed?

Senate "A" is adopted.

Senator Bartolomeo.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO:

Thank you, Madam President.

I do want to say that I really do appreciate the comments of Senator Witkos. He makes some very, very good points and we certainly will -- will heed his advice. And with that, I would urge passage of the bill as amended, Madam President -- or Consent.

THE CHAIR:

Yeah. Seeing no objection to putting it on the Consent Calendar, so ordered.

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Also on page 30, Calendar 54, substitute for Senate Bill Number 229, AN ACT CONCERNING SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST PREVENTION, Favorable Report of the Select Committee (inaudible).

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

That item might be passed temporarily.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And if the Clerk would call as the next item Calendar page 30, Calendar 95, Senate Bill 176.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

On page 30, Calendar 95, Senate Bill Number 176, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PURCHASE OF MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT POLICIES BY QUALIFIED MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES, Favorable Report of the Committee on Aging.

THE CHAIR:

On page five, Calendar 295, Senate Bill 445.

On page nine, Calendar 342, House Bill 5098.

And on page 10, Calendar 343, House Bill 5259.

On page 13, Calendar 404, Senate Bill 456.

Page 14, Calendar 408, Senate Bill 489.

On page 16, Calendar 430, House Bill 5285.

On page 18, Calendar 439, House Bill 5540.

On page 26, Calendar 497, House Bill 5081.

And on page 29, Calendar 511, House Bill 5146.

Page 30, Calendar 53, Senate Bill 203, and Calendar 95, Senate Bill 176.

On page 31, Calendar 116, Senate Bill 430.

Page 38, Calendar 280, Senate Bill 312.

And on page 41, Calendar 395, Senate 104.

THE CHAIR:

I guess that's all it. Okay.

Mr. Clerk, will you please open the machines and -- I'll open the machines. You call for a roll call vote.

THE CLERK:

Immediate roll call is ordered in the Senate on today's Consent Calendar. Immediate roll call ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, if all members have voted, the machine will be closed.

Mr. Clerk, will you call the tally.

THE CLERK:

On today's Consent Calendar.

Total number voting	35
Those voting Yea	35
Those voting Nay	0
Absent and not voting	1

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, before concluding today's session, would yield the floor to members who may wish to announce Committee meetings or for other points of personal privilege.

THE CHAIR:

Are there points of personal privilege? Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO:

Thank you, Madam President.

Madam President, while I enjoyed being at the circle today, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish my wife a very happy birthday today.

THE CHAIR:

Oh my goodness.

SENATOR FASANO:

I missed the birthday dinner, but it -- I can't think of another group to spend it with other than my wife. So happy birthday to my wife.

THE CHAIR:

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needs to get back to. So, after Senator Osten will be Caye Helsley.

SENATOR CATHY OSTEN: Thank you Senator Bartolomeo and Cathy is just fine.

Good afternoon Chairs, Ranking Members of the Committee on Children. I'm Senator Cathy Osten and I am here today to voice my support for Senate Bill 203, otherwise known as Erin's Law. This bill would develop an age-appropriate statewide sexual assault curriculum for public schools to present to their children.

Many people have asked why, with all the things that we are required to teach children, we should add one more thing to the pile. And I say why not?

I could tell you about the young women I met while working for the Department of Correction. Sixty-seven percent of all female inmates are abused pre-adolescence. One young woman I knew would relive her 10th birthday 'gift' of familial rape, by jumping off of stairs or fire escapes. She escaped then by jumping out a second story window, breaking both legs. This young woman still bears the scars from that, emotional and physical.

I could also tell you about my own family member, the reason why I've worked so hard with Erin's Law, who was abused and was not able to say so for over a year.

Even more, I could tell you that children have more to fear from inside the home than from strangers, as 90 percent of sexual assaults are perpetrated by family, friends or neighbors.

I met Erin Merryn at the Glamour Magazine Awards and heard of her campaign to bring Sexual Abuse Prevention and awareness to all 50 states and

even possibly beyond. I asked her for information about this initiative, and after reading it, I am honored to introduce this legislation here in Connecticut. As Erin herself as stated, nine states have passed this legislation and it is pending in over 25 more.

Returning to the question of why here and why now, it is simply right. Also, if not now, then when? The socio-economic implications of the damaged adults our inaction leaves us with increases each year.

I want to leave with the story of Charmaine, a 20-year-old young lady while working with the Department of Correction. I was conducting a program very similar to Scared Straight, but without much of the yelling, which brought young offenders together with teens to show the young people the possible consequences of their actions. During the program, Charmaine spoke about her life, the choices she had made and the sexual abuse she had suffered at the hands of her family members. Later in the week she came to me and told me that the program had made a huge difference in her life. When she had returned from the last outing for the program she had made a phone call to her family telling them to keep her daughter away from her abusive cousin. She revealed to me that she had not known that sexual abuse was neither appropriate nor acceptable and she did not have to put up with it. Through the program and the education she received, she knew that she did not have to put up with it and that she could help protect her daughter from experiencing the same abuse by keeping her away from the abuser.

I ask you today to please pass this bill, educate our children about abuse, and protect them from these horrible acts. Thank you very much for letting me come again before you.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Thank you Senator Osten and thank you very much for bringing this to our attention and for fighting so hard for it last year. And although we weren't able to get it through, we appreciate you are trying again.

Are there any questions from committee?

SENATOR OSTEN: Thank you very much. I really appreciate it.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Thank you. Have a great day. Thanks for testifying.

Caye Helsley. After Ms. Helsley we will have Representative Steinberg.

CAYE HELSLEY: Hello? I'm sorry. My name is Caye Helsley and I am a Masters of Public Health with 20 years experience here in Hartford managing disease prevention programs, one of which included Lyme Disease management for a large insurer back in '89. I never expected to become a victim here in the state and be unable to get care and I have now been working with a few of you here and I'm very appreciative of your time and your effort to start to understand how Connecticut has gotten so far behind in the battle against Lyme Disease.

So, I'm here in support in testimony of Bill 204. I believe it is an important first step to at least begin educating our camp counselors, our parents, in an effort to prevent the damage that can happen to our children. Our children are the biggest demographic. Fifty percent of our dogs in the state and now many of our children are sick. I run a call center helping people in Connecticut get tested for Lyme. I help them navigate the medical system here and there have been so many children that are late stage diagnosed with permanent damage, like my daughter and myself. I think it's a tragedy.

engaged in youth athletics. I hope that the Children's Committee will attempt to address these concerns and work towards a resolution that protects the safety of our student athletes while responding to the organizations that support them. I believe that as you all as a committee work out some of those concerns, and you'll probably be hearing quite a bit of it this afternoon, in this committee process that you'll probably help the bill to gain unanimous support and assure its success when it reaches both the House and the Senate and I think that's our ultimate goal for all of us when we have a bill before us.

Thank you very much. Happy to answer any questions you might have.

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony, Senator. Are there any questions for the Senator? Seeing none. We thank you.

We're calling up next Wendy Ward followed by Representative Lavielle.

WENDY WARD: Thank you. I'm Wendy Ward. I'm not here with any organization I just represent moms and dads. S.B. 203.

When it comes to sexual assault, it is easy to bury ourselves in the very real and depressing statistics. To me, it becomes like the national deficit, so big it almost doesn't seem real. So, we adopt an "It doesn't affect me" mentality. I sat down to write this and I thought I will tell you all the statistics, but what do they really mean? Who are the one in three girls and who are the one in six boys? Are they someone else's kids? The answer is no. They are our kids in our community with no exceptions to race, color, or economic status. In my daughter's second grade class of 18, those statistics would mean that three of her female friends and one of her male

friends will experience sexual assault by the time they graduate high school. In my daughter's kindergarten class of 18, it would mean four of her girl friends and one of her boy friends. Of those nine friends, statistics also support that we may only know about one of them to help them cope and understand their own needs.

So, with the diplomas we will be sending these children off, according to the CDC, with higher rates and chances of unwanted pregnancy, chronic pelvic pain, gastrointestinal disorders, genealogical and pregnancy complications, frequent migraines, back pain, facial pain, shock, denial, fear, confusion, anxiety, withdrawal, guilt, nervousness, distrust, posttraumatic stress disorder, which can often result in emotional detachment, sleep disorders, flashbacks, as you heard today, mental replay of the assault, chronic psychological consequences like depression, attempted suicide, alienation, not to mention social and behavioral consequences in general, also higher rates of alcohol and drug abuse, even prostitution, negative dieting behaviors, vomiting, eating -- overeating, fasting.

And yet, there is another side to this education. Who are the people who assault? The CDC also cites that in 2010, 2,198 juveniles were arrested for forcible rape; 35,001 arrested for aggravated assault. Using just an average of our common statistic, this would suggest that almost 488 of those 2,198 juveniles could have been sexually abused themselves. You see we have two growing problems. This education wouldn't just prevent victim. It would prevent assailants. Too often hurt kids, hurt kids.

Facing assault head on is a difficult task. It is personal. It is often hard to comprehend. It is painful and alarming. Nonetheless, it is real.

Erin's law wouldn't just work to prevent it. It could catch it. It could stop it. It could educate both the potential victim and the potential abuser. Opening the conversation to all ages would be life altering and would begin the work of raising new generations.

Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Thank you. Do we have any questions? Representative Wood.

REP. WOOD: No question, but I'm very proud to call you a constituent. So thank you for your testimony. I think you made a very good point on this is real and we need to help make this education accessible to people and this is a very good thing. And I think you also said hurt kids, hurt kids. So thank you very much for your testimony. Well done.

REP. URBAN: Do you have any other questions? Seeing none. Thank you for your testimony and now we will ask Representative Lavielle. Welcome.

REP. LAVIELLE: Thank you. Good afternoon and Representative Urban, if you're ever in any doubt you can just call me Madame Lavielle and that will suffice.

HB5113

So, good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, and Representative Urban, Senator Linares, Representative Betts and all the distinguished members of the committee. I believe you may have received my written testimony. If not, you will receive it later. I will be very quick. I have been persuaded by three of the members of the Parent's Concussion Coalition whom you have seen or will see later, Anne Sherwood, Pippa Bell Ader and Diana Coyne, who are from Westport, who have been very eloquent in expressing to me the gravity of head injuries that are incurred in sports and the gravity of their consequences

ARLEIGHA COOK: Thank you.

REP. URBAN: Maria Jordan. Welcome, Maria.

MARIA JORDAN: Thank you. Good evening, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and Representatives Betts and Candelaria. Thank you for your time and hearing my testimony on Raised Bill 203, AN ACT CONCERNING A STATEWIDE SEXUAL ASSAULT AND ABUSE AWARENESS PROGRAM, a bill that I wholeheartedly support which will engage, empower, and protect children. My name is Maria Jordan, I'm a first year masters of social work student at the University Connecticut in the policy practice discipline. I reside in Redding, Connecticut. I am a parent and I'm also a certified domestic violence, sexual assault, and Sandy Hook survivor crisis hotline volunteer at a local nonprofit domestic violence agency in Fairfield County.

Many of the adult client's that I counsel via the hotline are adult survivors of child sexual assault and abuse, abuses that occurred 20 to 40 years ago and the client victims are still emotionally shattered and in pain. The unresolved psychology impact of these abuses are manifested well into adulthood and this is the future for current children who have suffering under the victimization of sexual assault if the sexual assault and abuse awareness program is not enacted.

The long-term effects of unresolved victimization as a child are triggers and flashbacks that stimulate victim's memories back to child sexual assault, retraumatization and revictimization in reliving these violent acts from triggers or

flashbacks which are part of the reason for the calls, post-traumatic stress disorder, unresolved mental health issues directly related to the assault and abuse, substance abuse, physical health problems related to mental health issues, social disengagement, and the inability to maintain steady employment.

Domestic violence, sexual assault, and child-specific abuses are crimes that have no boundaries. Victims cross every geographic, socio-economic, ethnic, race, gender, and cultural demographic within Connecticut. There are an estimated 60 million survivors of sexual assault living in the United States today. There are almost 90,000 cases of child sexual assaults reported annually nationally. And children are most vulnerable to sexual assault between ages 7 and 13. Their short-term effects are behavioral changes often -- the behavioral changes are often the first signs of sexual abuse, mistrust, nervousness, or aggressive behavior toward adults, chronic depression, low self-esteem, and multiple personalities.

At this moment the Connecticut General Assembly has the opportunity to proactively enact legislation for every public school-aged child in grades two to five. The collaborative and comprehensive plan and public awareness between the Department of Children and Families, Department of Social Services, and the Department of Education would embrace teacher modules and prevention, intervention, identification, and response, engage educators and students, develop strategies in prevention, and intervention in positive outcomes, provide outreach for teacher, parent, and child, and establish uniform policies and procedures to assist children who may be

educational for sure. Thank you.

SENATOR BARTOLOMEO: Jillian, you were passed over a while ago, do you want to come on up?

SB203
SB204

JILLIAN GILCHREST: Yes, I had to go home and do mom duties, but I'm back. They can't do that yet for me, but -- Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, Representative Hoydick, and Representative Candelaria, my name is Jillian Gilchrest and I'm the Director of Public Policy and Commission for Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services. CONNSACS is the coalition of Connecticut's nine community-based sexual assault crisis services programs. Our mission is to end sexual violence and ensure high quality, comprehensive and culturally-competent sexual assault victim services.

During our last fiscal year certified sexual assault victim advocates provided services to over 7,000 victims and survivors of sexual violence, and community education and professional training programs to more than 35,000 individuals throughout the state. Our member programs could not be here today in person to testify but have submitted testimony that speaks to their experiences providing sexual abuse and assault awareness programming to students in elementary, middle, and high school, and to teachers and parents.

I actually started my professional career as a child advocate at the Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Eastern Connecticut and saw more than 400 children who had been sexually abused. I also went and spoke before high schools and elementary schools and middle schools and provided programs to both parents, teachers,

students, and also advocated on behalf of parents and families. So I know that this is important work. I know that it's hard work, but it's essential work and I applaud you and the Committee for addressing this. I also thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the goals of Senate Bill 203 which are to provide child sexual abuse and awareness programs in schools.

Contacts at our member programs have been providing educational programs to schools and communities for decades. We understand from our experiences that preventing child sexual abuse requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond teaching children about safe touch and how to ask for help. Child sexual abuse similar to other forms of sexual violence is most often perpetrated by someone the victim knows. Sexual offenders use their power to control, manipulate, and coerce -- coerce their victims.

Child sexual abuse, again similar to other forms of sexual violence is allowed to continue because people lack the skills and/or will to step up and step in. That is why we are a strong proponent of primary prevention education, a strategy that aims to prevent sexual abuse by providing a framework for healthy relationships and addressing oppressive and aggressive attitudes before they become violent actions. We think that there's great potential to reach more Connecticut children in a way that would not -- that would help them to identify abuse, respond to abuse when it occurs, not engage in offending behaviors, and create a culture that will not tolerate violence.

As the Committee continues their discussions of

Senate Bill 203, if you don't mind, I'll just finish, CONNSACS would be happy to assist in any way. In particular we would offer the following recommendations. Please engage CONNSACS staff and our community-based educators in collaborative work to identify or develop the programming, please encourage boards of education to partner and utilize community-based sexual assault community educators, please expand on the bill's current language regarding age-appropriate educational materials to include prevention education and to expand it to all grades K through 12, and to please build on the bill's requirement to engage parents or legal guardians by giving those parents and legal guardians educational opportunities not just a sign-off.

I'll finish by saying we also support Senate Bill 204, AN ACT CONCERNING CAMPERS' EDUCATION, in particular section 3 which requires youth camps to develop programs to address sexual abuse. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and thank you for staying all day. It was a very interesting day on concussions, all of it was very fascinating before I had to leave. So thank you.

REP. URBAN: Thank you for your testimony, Jillian.

And I believe that we've been through the list. If there's anybody here who has not testified and would like to, this would be the opportunity to do that. Going twice. Call it a night. Thank you all.

Children Public Hearing

February 27, 2014

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. No. 203

Submitted by: Sarah Skinner, Social Work Intern at Southern Connecticut State University

Good morning members of the Committee on Children. My name is Sarah Skinner and I am a student at Southern Connecticut State University and my internship is through the Department of Children and Families.

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, there were 61,472 cases of child sexual abuse reported in the United States in 2011. Children should be educated about the dangers of sexual assault and abuse. When a child is a victim of sexual abuse and assault, there should also be policies and procedures to assist these children through their tough times.

When I was a sophomore in college, I took a self-defense course. After the class was over, I felt as though I was an empowered woman that could defense herself. Some people do not have the privilege to take a class like I did. By educating children about the dangers of sexual assault and abuse, more classes could be offered for willing participants.

Advocating is a value of social work that I want to possess. This is why I decided to take a stand and advocate for children to be educated about sexual assault and abuse. I feel as though it is important to give a child the knowledge about sexual assault and abuse before they encounter it or know someone that has experienced this.

Thank you,

Sarah Skinner, Social Work Intern

Testimony 203

Good evening members of the Committee of Children. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of S.B. 203. My name is Steven Loschiavo and I am currently a senior at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven. I am currently in the Social Work undergraduate program at the university. I am currently the social work intern at West Haven Child Development Center. I work with children between the ages of six months to five years. I am writing this testimony in support of S.B. 203.

According to the Child Welfare League of America (2014), "In 2010, Connecticut had 45,313 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 25,777 reports were referred for investigation" (p. 1). The number of referrals that turned into investigations is significantly high considering that the number is over half of the total referrals for that year. Of those "25, 777" reports that were recommended for investigation, "10,846 children were victims of abuse or neglect in Connecticut, a rate of 13.4 per 1,000 children, representing a 11.2% increase from 2009. Of these children, 99.0% were neglected, 6.1% were physically abused, and 4.5% were sexually abused" (The Child Welfare League of America, 2014, p. 1). After reviewing the data, these percentages were quite concerning. These incidents of sexual abuse against a child are increasing over the years and are seemingly on the rise.

As I stated before, I am currently an intern at the West Haven Child Development Center. I work with children every single day. There are about 160 children that attend the center. They are between the ages of six months to five years. After my first month or so there I would have never thought that these children would have been sexually abused. As time went on, I really started to get to know these children, conduct observations on their classroom behavior, and establish a rapport with them. I began to review some of their case files and I came across some information unbeknownst to me. Out of the 160 or so children that attend the center, I have come to find out 4 of them have been sexually abused in the recent past. The children are carefree and happy during the day. One would never in the slightest think that a child so young and innocent could be victim to such an atrocity. By providing an awareness program across the entire state, the amount of referrals would decline and families would be aware of the risks that their children are in. Grant these children the opportunity to live carefree and happy lives instead of being traumatized victims of sexual abuse that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Those opposed to the bill will say that these programs instituted across the state will cost billions and billions of dollars. Those opposed will also say that all Connecticut residents will pay the price in state taxes. Anything in life costs money and if it benefits the livelihood of children, then why oppose it? Why should the children have to pay the price with their lives because nothing was done about it? It is time to advocate! What those opposed need to remember is that these children are our future. They will continue to carry on long after we are gone. We are the catalysts for giving them that opportunity and we need to take the time to prevent such disturbing actions from occurring against them. This is why I, Steven Loschiavo, support S.B. 203. I would ask that the Committee of Children vote favorably in seeing this bill become law. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak and having my voice heard.

Thank you,
Steven Loschiavo

Reference

Child Welfare League of America. (2014). *Connecticut's Children 2012*. Retrieved from http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/statefactsheets/2012/connecticut.pdf

CONNECTICUT
VOICES
FOR CHILDREN

Independent research and advocacy to improve the lives of Connecticut's children

Testimony Supporting
S.B. 203: An Act Concerning a State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program[1]

Kenneth Feder and Sharon Langer, J.D., M Ed.

Committee on Children
2/27/2014

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and distinguished members of the committee:

We are testifying today on behalf of Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based public education and advocacy organization that works statewide to promote the well-being of Connecticut's children, youth, and families

Connecticut Voices supports the creation of a sexual abuse and assault awareness program, which will help schools to support children academically and emotionally as they deal with the trauma of sexual violence.

Sexual abuse and assault can cause severe childhood trauma.[2] Victims of such sexual abuse and assault also are more likely to experience other adverse childhood experiences detrimental to future health.[3] Childhood trauma negatively impacts brain development, increasing biological risk factors that cause children to become distracted and defensive, and to engage in risky behavior.[4] As a result, children who are exposed to trauma are more likely to experience academic failure, more likely to be chronically absent from school, and more likely to have behavior problems in schools.[5]

It is also important to note that many children who have been exposed to serious trauma adapt negatively to their traumatic environment by acting out or engaging in distracting or disruptive behavior.[6] Unfortunately, Connecticut's schools often respond to these behaviors with exclusionary discipline, even when these are behaviors that could be managed by the school while keeping children in the classroom.[7] These disciplinary tactics not only cost students valuable time in class; they may also often force trauma victims to stay at home in the traumatic environment that is causing the disruptive behavior in schools.

Trauma victims in Connecticut appear to be behind in school.

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[1] Testimony adapted from the report by Kenneth Feder and Tamara Kramer, "Raise the Grade Improving Educational Opportunities for Youth in State Care," *Connecticut Voices for Children* January 2014 Available at http://www.ctvoices.org/publications/raise-grade-improving-educational-opportunities-children-state-care

[2] *Ibid*

[3] *Ibid*

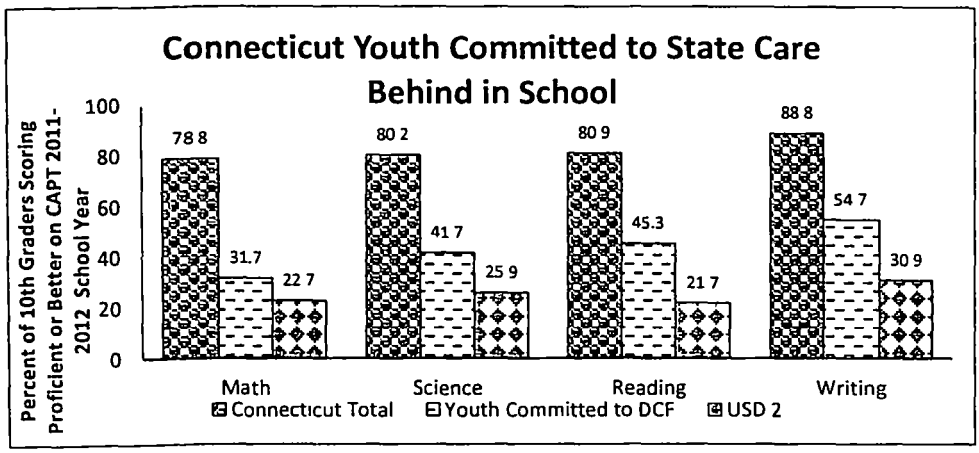
[4] See, Vincent Felitti et al., "Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* May, 1998 Available at http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797%2898%2900017-8/fulltext#section19

[5] See, Christopher Blodget, "Adopting ACEs Screening and Assessment in Child Serving Systems," *Washington State University*. July, 2012 Available at http://extension.wsu.edu/ahec/trauma/Documents/ACE%20Screening%20and%20Assessment%20in%20Child%20Serving%20Systems%207-12%20final.pdf

[6] See, Kari Jacobsen, "Educators' Experience with Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom," *St. Catherine University* May, 2013 Available at http://sophia.stkate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1201&context=msw_papers

[7] See, Jeana Bracey et al. "Improving Outcomes for Children in Schools Expanded School Mental Health August 2013 Available at http://www.chdi.org/admin/uploads/682667905526837dc13ac9.pdf

The detrimental impact of trauma on education is particularly apparent in the academic performance of children in the care of Connecticut's Department of Children and Families' (DCF) foster care and juvenile justice systems.[8] It is likely that most of these Connecticut children have been victims of some form of childhood trauma.[9] As shown below, these children in state care are less likely than their peers to score proficient or better on state standardized tests, a common measure of academic performance.[10]



Childhood trauma, such as sexual abuse and assault, can deprive children of academic opportunity.

Voices is encouraged that, in addition to important prevention measures, the proposed bill requires training for teachers on the prevention, identification, and response to sexual assault, and encourages a uniform sexual assault policy which guides victims to assistance, provides them with counseling, and provides them with academic supports. All of these measures will help to alleviate the detrimental impact of trauma on learning, and may deter inappropriate exclusionary discipline.

We encourage the committee to support S.B. 203, and to ensure that any sexual abuse and assault program supports the provision of trauma-informed treatment and academic assistance that can keep children learning and in the classroom in spite of their experience.

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[8] See, Kenneth Feder and Tamara Kramer, "Raise the Grade Improving Educational Opportunities for Youth in State Care," *Connecticut Voices for Children* January 2014 Available at http://www.ctvoices.org/publications/raise-grade-improving-educational-opportunities-children-state-care.

[9] See, Portland Research Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health, "Traumatic Stress/ Child Welfare," *Focal Point: Research, Policy, and Practice in Children's Mental Health* Winter, 2007, Volume 21, No 1 Available at http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/PDF/fpW07.pdf, or through Child Welfare Information Gateway at https://www.childwelfare.gov/responding/trauma.cfm See also, Robert Franks, "Building a Trauma Informed System of Care for Children in Connecticut," *Connecticut Health and Development Institute.* Available at http://www.governor.ct.gov/malloy/lib/malloy/SHAC_Doc_2013.04.26_Franks_presentation.pdf

[10] Figure adapted from Kenneth Feder and Tamara Kramer, "Raise the Grade Improving Educational Opportunities for Youth in State Care," *Connecticut Voices for Children* January 2014 Available at http://www.ctvoices.org/publications/raise-grade-improving-educational-opportunities-children-state-care

Committee on Children Public Hearing
February 27th, 2014
Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 203

Good morning members of the Committee on Children. I want to thank the committee chairs for an opportunity to speak on this matter. My name is Colleen Gore and I am a Bachelor of Social Work student at Southern Connecticut State University, and I am working as an intern at CT Junior Republic. I am here today in support of SB 203.

Statistically, every two minutes, somebody is sexually assaulted in the United States. Teenage girls are four times more likely to be victims of sexual assault than the normal population. Age-Appropriate education in schools has the potential to diminish these statistics by teaching individuals, both students and faculty the warning signs of sexual abuse and assault, resources to further educate individuals and a response policy that has the ability to protect the individual. According to the Rape Crisis Center website, sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes with only an average of 39% being reported to police each year. Providing individuals with resources and education may cause individuals to either come forward and report to police, or notice warning signs on other individuals and have the knowledge and support to have the other person receive the right help. I used to be a Resident Advisor at SCSU, where I held an assault awareness program for my residents. 70% of the individuals who attended my program had no previous knowledge of sexual assault statistics, or what to do in certain situations they may be placed in. Education in schools can prevent a wide spread lack of knowledge of this important topic.

I understand the opposition's side, saying that education about this "taboo" topic should not be in schools and students do not need to know about these topics at an early age. But if there is no knowledge early on, we cannot expect people to know what to do in a situation they have the possibility to be faced with. If a parent does not want their child a part of the program, according to Section 1.3 subsection C, they have a right to waive the child from the program and be replaced with another academic program during the time of the course, without any consequences.

Again, I am in support of SB 203 and I ask the committee to vote favorably out of committee. Providing the proper education can reduce statistics by many. I want to thank the committee again for their time listening to my testimony.

Thank you again,
Colleen Gore
BSW Student
Intern – CT Junior Republic

Public hearing

February 27, 2014

Testimony in support of SB 203

Submitted by Emily Lifanda, SWK student at Southern Connecticut State University

Good morning members of the Children's Committee. My name is Emily Lifanda and I am a student at Southern Connecticut State University, department of Social work and a single mother of one. Thank you for this great opportunity, it feels very good that my opinion here is valued and taken into consideration. Going through the Bills, I came across this one that caught my attention SB- 203 which is An Act concerning a State -wide Sexual Abuse and assault awareness program. On a personal level I have never been sexually assaulted but I have witnessed sexual assault in one of my closest friends and what it did to her. If you people agree to pass this law it will be a very good thing. Student from grade six upward should be able know what sexual assault is and the damage it can cause and this can help them to either not be victims or victimizers.

Teaching children at an early age what sexual assault is will go a long way to save them from trauma should incase it happens. Being able to identify it will make them understand early on that it is wrong. And they have the right to know the different types of sexual assault. Teaching them how to report it, and making them understand that it is not their fault that it happen to them. My friend almost took her own life thank God that she had a great social

support around her when the issue came out. She felt ashamed, she did not want to tell anyone about it because she did not want fingers to be pointed at her or that she be looked upon differently. Statistics has shown that most people who get raped end up committing suicide or molest others or leave a very insecure life style. How can they suffer for something which is no fault of theirs? People have to be educated early about things like this. Education has never hurt anyone; instead it has brought light to many. Being aware of things is not a crime, children have to understand that they have to report sexual assault it does not matter how or by whom it happened; it is crime.

Moreover I don't agree that anyone should be exempted what so ever. If this sexual awareness program is implemented in school then everyone has to participate. This uniform policies that need to passed needs to learn by everyone because one of those children who are singled out might end up being a victim or victimizers. Everyone has a right to their opinion, those who are not in support of this I wish I can convince them. This bill will help our community and create awareness in the life of the younger generation. Please I call on you all to vote for this bill it is one of those awareness programs that our community needs

Thank you very much for letting me expresses my mind

Emily Lifanda; Student Southern CT State University.

Testimony of the Women's Center of Greater Danbury
In Support of SB 203 AAC A Statewide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program
Melanie Danyliw, Director of Training & Program Development, Legislative Liaison
Kelly Mullins, Program Manager of Education & Outreach
The Children's Committee, February 27, 2014

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and honorable members of The Children's Committee, my name is Melanie Danyliw, Director of Training & Program Development and legislative liaison at the Women's Center of Greater Danbury, a member agency of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) and the CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) providing sexual assault and domestic violence services throughout upper Fairfield and lower Litchfield counties. I am submitting this testimony with my colleague, Kelly Mullins, our Program Manager of Education, to support the goal of SB 203 to provide child sexual abuse and assault awareness programs in elementary schools, to highlight the local resources already available through CONNSACS member programs in achieving this goal, and to urge the inclusion of our experience in implementing the provisions of SB 203.

The Women's Center's elementary school outreach includes single and multi-session curricula dealing with child sexual assault from several perspectives. Our safe/unsafe/confusing touch curricula explore, in an age-appropriate way, behaviors and words that – "because they do not respect your body or your feelings", violate rights to privacy and safety; ways to extricate from risky situations; and how to access help. These programs are formatted as interactive puppet shows for the youngest children. For older elementary grades, these dangers are also expanded upon in our internet safety curricula.

As our child sexual assault programs are often part of a multi-session program, these concepts are also reinforced through accompanying bullying and bystander programs. Primary prevention, meanwhile, which focuses on building social skills and character strengths that reduce a child's vulnerability to be victimized or engage in unhealthy behavior in the first place....before there is risk or abuse ...is part of every curricula as well as offered as stand alone programs.

Concurrent teacher and parent modules are offered so that concepts taught to the students can be infused into other curricula and classroom activity or reinforced at home and so that adults can recognize warning signs of victimization or perpetration, handle a disclosure correctly, access help for the child, and provide supportive environments post-disclosure. In fact, we offer a *Creating a Trauma Sensitive Classroom* training for teachers that addresses, among other trauma, accommodating the needs of child sexual assault survivors and children who have witnessed domestic violence. Professional and parent programs also include primary prevention – raising strong, healthy, resilient children.

Importantly, our adult programs also explore warning signs of sexually problematic behavior in adults and youth so that the *adult* can intervene in a safe, effective and responsible manner. While our student-based programs can provide children with strategies to be safe, their most significant impact is giving the child the awareness, the words and permission to disclose. Given the power differential between children and abusers (even when they are older adolescents), educating adults about the critical role such proactive intervention plays in ending child sexual abuse is integral to keeping children safe.

During fiscal year 2012-13, the Women's Center provided 47 elementary school programs to 3498 students in our 13 town service area. We also provided 196 programs for 5546 middle school student

contacts and 233 programs for 7305 high school student contacts. These statistics are representat ive of previous years' outreach. The gap between elementary versus secondary school contacts that the statistics illustrate is representative of some of barriers and difficulties we face in doing outreach to elementary schools, including:

- The resistance of some administrators and parents to inclusion of these programs in their curricula and/or difficulties of inclusion of these topics due to time restraints and other curricula demands: Often, when there is a willingness to present these topics, time limitations are tackled by using a large-audience format. We are fortunate to have an interactive theatre troupe, *ACT OUT*, that can sometimes present this subject matter in an engaging manner. That format is the exception, however, and large group presentations, while better than no exposure, are limited in their effectiveness. Rare teacher training for reinforcing content in the small group classroom setting further compromises the impact of such types of education. Parents who attend the as-rare concurrent parent workshops are usually the parents who are already well versed in the topic. We have had success, however, working with some school districts to cover this material in a more universal Parent University format; nevertheless, incorporating parents is difficult.
- The constraints on our ability to both cultivate schools and parents so there is an understanding of the need for and nature of our programs and to then respond to school requests for education given the fact that we have only 2.5 community education staff

Lastly, we have always emphasized the efficacy of using our agency as a tool for child sexual assault awareness education because of the counseling support that our agency can immediately provide. Our educators are certified sexual assault/domestic violence counselor advocates and can immediately respond to crisis in the child and safety planning needs and provide the referral to our agency. In addition, our child advocate can provide on-going trauma-informed counseling to a child survivor as well as affected siblings while our adult counselors can respond to the needs of caregivers. As we are part of our area multi-disciplinary team for the investigation of child abuse, our services are part of a coordinated community response. Whether education or counseling, our services are free.

In conclusion, considering the resistances we have encountered in our outreach, we are grateful that SB 203 can provide the weight of authority for inclusion of child sexual assault programming in the elementary school setting at multiple levels. Given our experience and expertise in providing such educational programs and the support services that consequent disclosures demand, we also strongly urge the committee to consider CONNSACS' member programs as an important resource in the development and implementation of its goals.

Testimony of Setta Mushegian

In Support of *SB203, AAC A State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program*

February 26, 2014

Senator Bartolomeo and State Representative Urban,

My name is Setta Mushegian and I am a resident of Stamford, CT. I am currently the Director of Crisis Counseling and Advocacy at The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education (The Center). Prior to becoming the Director of Crisis Counseling and Advocacy I acted as one of our Community Educators. In addition to my current counseling and advocacy responsibilities I provide certification training for both Stamford and Norwalk Police Department and educational trainings for medical professionals. I currently sit on the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services Board of Directors, The Governor's Task Force on Justice for Abused Children Multidisciplinary Team Evaluation Committee and act as co-chair of the Child Sexual Abuse Response Team (SART) of Darien, Greenwich and Stamford.

As a member of the SART team I have seen and experienced first hand the impact of sexual abuse on children and their families. I have also seen and experienced first hand the impact that educational presentations for children regarding sexual abuse can have on a child's ability to disclose when something has happened to them and to feel supported when they do come forward. Children will not know where to report sexual violence without first having the language and knowledge to describe what it is. It is for these reasons that I stand behind SB203, AAC A State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program although I would like to encourage the use of the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Centers (CONNSACS) and their nine member centers to create and implement this educational programming. CONNSACS is a statewide coalition of individual sexual assault crisis programs and works to end sexual violence through victim assistance, community education, and public policy advocacy. The Center is one of CONNSACS' member centers.

The Center's Community Education Department currently provides developmentally appropriate education about sexual violence to children K-12, police officers, medical professionals, college students and community members. In the 2012-2013 fiscal year we provided education to over 10,300 individuals and in this year we project almost doubling that number. The Center's Feeling Safe Program, which was designed to address personal safety for children, pre-school through 5th grade, is very much in line with the kind of education SB 203 proposes. "Feeling Safe" is safety education, not sex education. The lessons it teaches promote personal safety, teaching children how to identify the parts of their body that are private, who is allowed to touch those parts and what to do if they feel uncomfortable when/if someone touches their body in a way that feels uncomfortable. Each of our Community Educators is a certified sexual assault crisis counselor and is able to act

as an additional safety net so that a child knows we are a trusted resource to whom they can disclose that they have been a victim. In addition to the "Feeling Safe" program we also have educational programming available for teachers and parents so they are able to recognize signs of sexual abuse and know what to do when a child discloses.

The Center has been successful in getting the Feeling Safe Program into most of the Elementary Schools in the towns that we serve – Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, New Canaan, Norwalk, Westport, Weston and Wilton but often times because it is up to the individual school, we are not always able to reach their students. And, if we do get into the school we are not always able to provide education for their parents and teachers. If the state were to implement this type of education programming as a requirement, The Center would be able to meet this need but would need additional funding in order to do so.

Additionally I would like to add that education programming related to sexual assault/awareness is incredibly important for all age groups. The current language of the bill proposes education for students between 2nd and 5th grade – while I agree that education for this age group is important so is education for *all* school-aged children. Children need to hear these messages more than once and it needs to be reinforced by their teachers, caregivers and community members. Children need to be able to identify the parts of their body that are private, what to do if someone touches them or speaks to them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable and as they get older, understand what sexual violence is and know where to go if this happens to them. While all of this information is vital, it is also vital to begin to educate children about the subtle forms of sexual harassment that create a culture in which sexual violence occurs and to encourage children and communities to intervene when they see something, whether it's sexual harassment or a situation which they know may lead to sexual violence.

Thank you for your time,

Setta Mushegian, MSW

Director of Crisis Counseling and Advocacy

The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education

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Testimony for SB 203

Feb 27th 2014
Wendy Ward
When it comes to sexual violence it is easy to bury ourselves in very real and very depressing statistics. To me after a while it becomes like the national deficit - so big it almost doesn't seem real. So we tune it out... Adopt an "it doesn't affect me" mentality.
I sat down to write this and thought well I will tell them the statistics, but what do they really mean? Who are the 1 in 3 and the one in six. Are they someone else's kids?
The answer is NO. They are our kids, in our community, with no exceptions to race, color or economic status. In my daughters 2nd grade class of 18, those statistics would mean 3 of her female friends and one of her male friends will experience sexual assault by the time they graduate high school. In my daughters kindergarten class of 18 it is 4 of her girlfriends and 1 of her boy friends. Of those 9 friends - statistics also support that we MAY only know about 1 of them to help them cope and understand their own needs.

So with those diplomas we will be sending them off to the world with higher rates and chances of:
Unwanted pregnancy
Chronic pelvic pain
Gastrointestinal disorders
Gynecological and pregnancy complications
Frequent migraines
Back pain
Facial pain

Shock
Denial
Fear
Confusion
Anxiety
Withdrawal
Guilt
Nervousness
Distrust
Post traumatic stress disorder which can result in emotional detachment, sleep disruptions, flashbacks, mental replay of assault
Chronic psychological consequences- depression, attempted suicide, alienation, not to mention social issues behavioral consequences
Not to mention higher rates of alcohol and drug abuse, prostitution and negative diet behavior like fasting, vomiting, or over eating to name a few.

AND there is another side to this education – who are the people who assault? The CDC sites that in 2010 2198 juveniles were arrested for forcible rape and 35,001 arrested for aggravated assault. Using an average of the common statistics (4.5) would suggest that 488 of those same 2198 juveniles *could* have been sexually abused themselves. You see we have two growing

problems. This education wouldn't just prevent victims. It would prevent assailants. Too often - hurt kids, hurt kids.

Facing assault head on is a difficult task. It is personal. It is often hard to comprehend. It is painful and alarming. None the less it is REAL. And Erin's law wouldn't just work to prevent it... It could catch it. It could stop it. It can educate both the potential victim and the potential abuser. Opening the conversation to all ages would be life altering...and begin the work of raising new generations.

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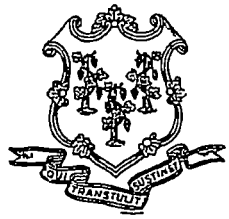

State of Connecticut
SENATE

Chair
Labor & Public Employees Committee
Vice Chair
Planning & Development Committee
Member
Public Safety & Security Committee
Veterans' Affairs

February 27, 2014

Good afternoon, Chairs, Ranking Members, and the members of the Committee on Children.

I am Senator Cathy Osten and I am here to voice my support for SB 203, otherwise known as Erin's Law. This bill would develop an age-appropriate state-wide sexual assault curriculum for public schools to present to their students.

Many people have asked why, with all of the things we are required to teach children, we should add one more thing to the pile. I say why not?

I could tell you about the young women I met while working for the Department of Correction. Sixty-seven percent of all female inmates are abused pre-adolescence. One young woman I knew would relive her 10th birthday 'gift' of familial rape by jumping off of stairs or fire escapes. She escaped then by jumping out of a second-story window, breaking both legs. This young woman still bears the scars from that, emotional and physical.

I could also tell you about my own family member, the reason I have worked so hard with Erin's law, who was abused and was not able to say so for over a year.

Even more, I could tell you that children have more to fear from inside the home than from strangers as ninety percent of sexual assaults are perpetrated by family, friends, or neighbors.

I met Erin Merryn at the Glamour Magazine Awards and heard of her campaign to bring Sexual Abuse Prevention and awareness to all 50 states, and even possibly beyond. I asked her for information about this initiative, and after reading it, am honored to introduce this legislation here in Connecticut. As Erin herself has stated, 9 states have passed this legislation, and it is pending in over 25 more.

Returning to the question of why here, and why now, it is simply right. Also, if not now, then when? The socio-economic implications of the damaged adults our inaction leaves us with increases each year.

I want to leave with the story of Charmaine, a twenty-year-old young lady I met while working with the Department of Correction. I was conducting a program, similar to Scared Straight, but without much of the yelling, which brought young offenders together with teens to show the young people the possible consequences of their actions. During the program, Charmaine spoke about her life, the choices she had made, and the sexual abuse she had suffered at the hands of her family members. Later in the week, she came to me and told me that the program had made a huge difference in her life. When she had returned after the last outing for the program, she had made a phone call to her family, telling them to keep her daughter away from her abusive cousin. She revealed to me that she had not known that sexual abuse was neither appropriate nor acceptable, and she did not have to put up with it. Through the program and the education she received, she knew that she did not have to put up with it, and that she could help protect her daughter from experiencing the same abuse by keeping her away from the abuser.

I ask you today to please pass this bill, educate our children about abuse, and protect them from these horrible acts. Thank you.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Public Hearing Testimony

Children's Committee

February 27, 2014

S.B. No. 203 AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM

The Department of Children and Families **supports** S.B. No. 203, An Act Concerning a State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program. This bill requires DCF, in collaboration with the Departments of Education and Social Services, to identify or develop a state-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness program for use by local and regional Boards of Education.

This bill is based on Erin's Law, an effort led by Erin Merryn of Illinois, a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. To date, Erin's law has been signed into law in nine states: Illinois; Missouri; Indiana; Maine; Michigan; Arkansas; Mississippi; Nevada; and Vermont.

Sadly, it is estimated that one in five children will be abused or neglected before they reach the age of 18. DCF believes that greater awareness of this issue will let children know that help is available and also will assist educators in their duties as mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

Testimony in Support of Raised Bill No. 203, LCO No. 1182

"An Act Concerning a State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program"

Committee on Children

27 February 2014

Good afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Committee on Children. Thank you for your time in hearing my testimony. I extend my support to Raised Bill No. 203.

My name is Maria Jordan, a first year, UConn MSW candidate in the Policy Practice Discipline. I am also a trained Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Sandy Hook Survivor crisis hotline volunteer at a local, non-profit, domestic violence agency in Fairfield County.

Many of the adult client's that call into the crisis hotline and that I counsel are childhood survivors of sexual assault and abuse. In many of these calls, (the childhood sexual assault and abuse occurred over 20, 30 or 40 years ago). Due to stigmatization and a general lack of discourse, education and training on this subject, these "then-child" victims have fallen through the cracks of society. There was no safety net, system nor collaborative efforts in which to empower these "then-children" to disclose, report, or to receive treatment for (physical and/or mental health issues). And, worst of all, these client/victims of childhood sexual assault and abuse are still emotionally shattered and in pain. In coping with the unresolved damage caused by child sexual assault and abuse, the psychological effects of being the victim of such crimes are manifested well into adulthood.

Symptoms that Adult Clients Are Experiencing as a Result of Unresolved Child Sexual Assault and Abuse: Source: www.womensissues.about.com

- 20% of all Child Victims Develop Serious Psychological Problems
- Triggers & Flashbacks: Stimulating the victim's memory back to the Child Sexual Assault and Abuse.
- Re-traumatization and Re-Victimization in Reliving the Violence via Triggers and Flashbacks.
- PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).
- Suicidal Ideation.
- Guilt.
- Depression.
- Anxiety.
- Low Self-Esteem.
- Substance Abuse.
- Unresolved Mental Health Issues related directly to the Child Sexual Abuse and Assault.
- Physical Health Problems related to the Mental Health Issues. (Mind and Body).
- Social Disengagement and the Inability to Maintain Steady Employment.
- Inter-Generational Perpetration of Violence Due to Unresolved Behavioral Issues.

These crisis hotline clients are a microcosm of all childhood sexual assault and abuse victims within the state. They are the face and the collateral damage of this "shroud of silence" and "our little secret" that historically has existed and is strongly associated with the Twentieth Century reaction to Child Sexual Assault and Abuse. This is a most stigmatized and marginalized population that has endured, and is most directly impacted by, the unresolved trauma of such childhood violence on a daily basis within their adult lives. Domestic violence, sexual assault and child specific abuses are crimes that have no boundaries. They cross every geographic, socio-economic, ethnic, race, gender and cultural demographic. And, they exist within all communities of Connecticut; urban, suburban and rural.

Now, in 2014, the Connecticut General Assembly has the opportunity to proactively enact legislation that will provide training to educators and to public school aged children in grades two (2) through five (5) about the dangers of Child Sexual Abuse and Assault; address prevention and intervention models; provide outreach to parent(s) and, "to establish uniform policies and procedures to assist children in the state who may be victims of sexual assault and abuse".

Collaborative and Comprehensive Plan between the Department of Social Services, Department of Children and Families and the Department of Education to:

- Embrace teacher modules that address prevention, intervention, identification of and a response to Child Sexual Abuse and Assault.
- Engage educators and students in (grade appropriate) training;
- Develop strategies in prevention, intervention and in response to child sexual assault and abuse.
- Provide resources that encourage student/teacher/ parent education and outreach.
- Establish uniform policies and procedures to assist children who may be victims of sexual assault and abuse.

By looking back at the long-term effects of child sexual assault and abuse on crisis hotline clients, their associated symptoms caused by such trauma are daunting. In looking ahead, through the lens of this particular legislation and its proactive stance of embracing prevention, education, outreach and collaborative interventions, there exists a sense of hope for positive outcomes of child victims.

Facts & Statistics on Child Sexual Assault and Abuse:
Sources: www.womensissues.about.com & www.victimsofcrime.org.

- Almost 90, 000 Cases of Child Sexual Assault are Reported Each Year Nationally.
- Children Are Most Vulnerable to Sexual Abuse Between the Ages of 7 & 13.
- A 1000% Increased Risk of Re-victimization for Children with a Prior History of Sexual Victimization.
- 42% of School Officials Knew About Child Sexual Victim Episodes Compared to 13% Known by Police and 2% by Medical Professionals.

Short-Term Effects & Symptoms of Child Sexual Assault and Abuse Victims:
Source: www.womensissues.about.com.

- Behavioral Changes are Often the First Sign of Sexual Abuse.
- Mistrust, Nervous or Aggressive Behavior toward Adults.
- Chronic Depression
- Low Self Esteem
- Sexual Dysfunction
- Multiple Personalities

Domestic Violence is an act of control and power over the victim. In sexual assault and abuse, the building of a level of trust between perpetrator and child victim is crucial. By enacting legislation that has a strategic and collaborative inter-agency structure with key stakeholders invested in the prevention and intervention processes, this bill's framework will greatly impact the treatment options and outcomes of the child/victim in real-time. Bill No. 203, has the potential, to close critical gaps in the safety net by engaging, empowering and protecting children.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Maria Jordan
UConn MSW Candidate
Policy Practice Discipline
Class of 2015

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Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc.
96 Pitkin Street · East Hartford, CT 06108 · Phone 860-282-9881 · Fax 860-291-9335 · www.connsacs.org

Testimony of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services
In support of SB 203, AAC A State-Wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program
SB 204, AAC Campers' Education
Jillian Gilchrest, Director of Public Policy and Communications
Select Committee on Children, February 27, 2014

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and members of the Select Committee on Children, my name is Jillian Gilchrest and I am the Director of Public Policy & Communication for Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS). CONNSACS is the coalition of Connecticut's nine community-based sexual assault crisis services programs. Our mission is to end sexual violence and ensure high quality, comprehensive and culturally-competent sexual assault victim services.

Our member program could not be here in person to testify, but have submitted testimony that speaks to their experiences providing sexual abuse and assault awareness programming to students in elementary, middle, and high school, and to teachers and parents.

During our last fiscal year, certified sexual assault victim advocates provided hospital, police and court accompaniment, support groups, individual counseling, 24/7 hotline support, information and referrals to over 7,000 victims and survivors of sexual violence throughout the state, and 35,062 individuals with community education and professional training presentations.

I actually started my professional career as a child advocate at the Sexual Assault Crisis Center of Eastern Connecticut. I met with over 400 children during my time there, and with their family members and loved ones. I also went to schools and presented to students and teachers. This is important work, this is hard work, but it is essential work and I applaud you and this Committee for addressing it.

Based on our experience and expertise working with survivors of child sexual abuse and their families, we thank the committee for the opportunity to testify in support of the goals of SB 203, to provide child sexual abuse and assault awareness programs in elementary schools. CONNSACS and our community based sexual assault crisis services programs have been providing educational programs to schools and communities for decades. We understand from our experiences that preventing child sexual abuse requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond teaching children about safe touch and how to ask for help.

Child Sexual Abuse, similar to other forms of sexual violence, is most often perpetrated by someone known to the victim. Sexual offenders use their power to control, manipulate, and coerce their victims. Child sexual abuse, again, similar to other forms of sexual violence, is

allowed to continue because people lack the skills and/or will to step up and step in. So, again, I thank you for taking this important step forward.

We are strong proponents of primary prevention education, a strategy that aims to prevent sexual abuse by providing a framework for healthy relationships and addressing oppressive and aggressive attitudes before they become violent actions. We think that there is great potential to reach more Connecticut children in a way that would help them to identify abuse, respond to abuse when it occurs, not engage in offending behaviors, and create a culture that will not tolerate violence.

This education needs to start early, be ongoing, and age-appropriate. CONNSACS member program, the Women's Center of Greater Danbury, has submitted testimony that describes the multi-session program they provide which uses a safe/unsafe/confusing touch curricula, formatted as interactive puppet shows for the youngest children. For older elementary grades, these dangers are also expanded upon in internet safety. They include primary prevention, which focuses on building social skills and character strengths that reduce a child's vulnerability to be victimized or engage in unhealthy behavior before there is a risk in every curriculum.

As the Committee continues their discussions of SB 203, CONNSACS would be happy to assist the Committee in any ways that would be helpful. In particular, we would like to offer the following recommendations:

- Engage CONNSACS staff and our community based educators in collaborative work to identify or develop programming;
- Encourage Boards of Education to partner and utilize community based sexual assault community educators;
- Expand on the bill's current language regarding age-appropriate educational materials in regards to content and to all grades, K-12;
- Build on the bills requirement to engage parents or legal guardians by charging Boards of Education to create learning opportunities for parents.

SB 204, AAC Campers Education

CONNSACS also supports the intent of SB 204, section 3, to require youth camps to develop programs to address sexual abuse, identification of early warning signs, proper procedures for notifying camp leadership about possible abuse, and current best practices for addressing and preventing sexual abuse.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on such an important subject and initiatives.

Testimony Submitted in support of Bill #204

Good afternoon, My name is Jennifer Reid and I am the community coordinator for the BLAST Tick-borne Disease Prevention Program. I join you today in support of Bill # 204, "An Act Concerning Campers' Education." I would like to thank Co-chairs Bartolomeo and Urban and all of the members of the Committee on Children for their interest in ensuring a safe experience for campers in Connecticut. I will specifically address the sections of the bill that focus on education related to tick-borne diseases.

I have coordinated the BLAST program since its creation in 2008 when the town of Ridgefield received a $50,000 grant from the Department of Public Health to create a Tick-borne disease prevention program for Fairfield County. Working closely with Lyme disease educators, prevention researchers and our health department staff, we developed a program based on the Health Belief Model and the most current prevention research that continues to educate Connecticut citizens at health fairs, schools and community events to this day.

Serving in this capacity has given me the opportunity to travel our state not only speaking about prevention and early symptoms but listening to people's stories. Often these stories involve the plight of children—happy, healthy children who after being bitten by a tick were left suffering with pain, fatigue and cognitive issues long after their recovery should have been complete.

Parents whose children are unable to attend school, participate in sports or socialize with friends due to the effects of a tick bite often tell me they had no idea that Lyme disease could be this serious. They wish they had known more and they wish they had done more to keep their children safe. There is good reason why people who have had Lyme disease take prevention practices more seriously than the general public.

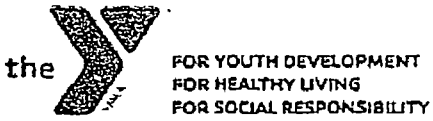
The problem of tick-borne diseases is complex and growing – it's progress sadly mired by medical controversy. But there is one point that I believe all parties agree on – the best possible thing we can do is prevent people from contracting the diseases in the first place. We know that children are at greatest risk, summer is the peak time for infection and the untended,

wooded areas are preferred tick habitat. Summer camp offers the optimal opportunity for children to become infected with a tick-borne disease.

As adults we want our children to experience the beauty of nature on a regular basis. It is essential to a complete childhood. So we must be responsible for teaching them how to enjoy nature and stay safe. To ignore the risks and put blinders on is simply unacceptable. When we know better, we are required to do better. And we know the dangers of tick-borne diseases. We have taught our children about seat belts and bike helmet safety without diminishing their interest in cars or riding a two wheeler. I believe they can learn about protective clothing, appropriate repellent use and tick checks without making them afraid of the woods.

This bill before you today will protect our children's right to safely do what children do best—play outdoors in the summer. Our concern is not only for Connecticut children but for all of the young people who visit our camps from other states and other countries, many of them far less familiar with Lyme disease than our children are. Families should know that they are making a decision that involves the possibility of encountering tick-borne diseases. They should receive appropriate information to help educate their family members and understand how their child will be protected while at camp. Camp staff should have the education and procedural guidelines to ensure the best possible decisions are made for the children in their care. And, I believe the business owners who run camps in our state deserve our support in developing best practice guidelines that, when followed, will help protect them from liability should a child appear to have contracted a tick-borne disease during his or her summer camp experience.

I believe it is time to tell the truth about ticks and the multiple illnesses they carry. The woods are different than they were in my 1950's Connecticut childhood. Tick-borne diseases are a growing public health threat, increasing in incidence and severity. The CDC has called on states, particularly in the Northeast, to take action. We have to face the fact that there is a risk involved now in encouraging children to enjoy nature and teach them how to proceed safely. As informed, responsible community members and concerned legislators, we must take this next step to protect Connecticut's children.



John L. Cattelan
Executive Director, Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs
S.B. 204, AN ACT CONCERNING
CAMPERS' EDUCATION
Children Committee
February 27, 2014

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Children Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is John Cattelan and I am here today on behalf of the Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs. The Alliance represents 22 YMCAs across the state of Connecticut.

I'm here today to raise concerns regarding S.B. 204, An Act Concerning Campers' Education.

If the state of Connecticut is going to start with education/prevention programs for specific illnesses, where will it stop? All of Connecticut's YMCAs implement and enforce appropriate safeguards and response systems to ensure camper well-being and safety.

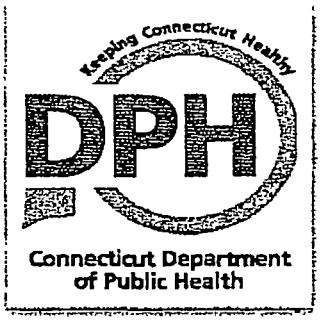
Connecticut Alliance of YMCAs
241 Trumbull Street, Hartford, CT 06103
P 860 216 1474 F 860 522 1314

Our YMCA camp handbook, parent handbook and staff manual already contain information regarding ticks, Lyme Disease, injury and abuse. All camp parents are required to sign a document confirming they have reviewed all of the information before their child is allowed to attend camp.

At our resident camps each child showers daily and is reminded to check themselves for ticks. In addition, our staff our trained to remind campers to check themselves for ticks and our reminded to apply and reapply bug spray.

Injury and abuse reporting is explained to every camper by camp directors and individually by counselors. All cases of injury and abuse are documented. There already are mandated reporting standards that deal with these issues, so we are unsure why new legislation is necessary.

We strongly support background checks of all of our staff and volunteers and that is currently our practice. However, the language in Section 4 of the proposed bill would now require fingerprinting. First of all, the fingerprinting of all staff and volunteers is a very expensive proposition. Secondly, the timing to conduct finger printing of staff is unattainable. Our camp staff returns from school at the end of May and they are interviewed the first two weeks of June. If they are hired, they begin work immediately. Sometimes it takes up to three months for an employee to clear this type of background check.



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Committee on Children
February 27, 2014

Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA
860-509-7101

Senate Bill 204 - ***An Act Concerning Campers' Education.***

The Department of Public Health provides the following information with regards to Senate Bill 204:

Section 1 of this bill requires the Department to work in consultation with groups representing Lyme disease and other tick-borne disease prevention, education and awareness programs in the state to identify or develop best practices for the prevention, identification, diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases and disseminate information through its website and printed materials. The Department feels that this provision is duplicative of efforts that have already taken place in the state and on the national level. Three state agencies provide the people of Connecticut with information about how to prevent tick-borne diseases: the DPH, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). This past year, the Department of Public Health revised its website, incorporating suggestions from legislators and other parties to include comprehensive materials for the public about the prevention of tick-borne diseases. This information can be found at http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3136&q=395590. At the request of the National Institutes of Health, the Institute of Medicine held a workshop in 2010 to examine the state of the science in Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. Speakers discussed current research and knowledge gaps; criteria for diagnosing tick-borne diseases; the groups most vulnerable to acquiring tick-borne diseases; and the experiences of those with tick-borne diseases. The workshop report was released in 2011 and is available for free online at http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2011/Critical-Needs-and-Gaps-in-Understanding-Prevention-Amelioration-and-Resolution-of-Lyme-and-Other-Tick-Borne-Diseases.aspx

The Department also notes that the public health approach to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases is focused on disease prevention. The Department does not make recommendations concerning the diagnosis and treatment of any disease. The ultimate decision regarding care of a particular patient should be made between the healthcare provider and patient.

Section 2 of this bill mandates licensed camps to develop or approve a Lyme disease education program, consisting of written and oral components, which includes information pertaining to: identification of ticks and other parasitic or potentially harmful insects, identification of early warning signs associated with Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, proper procedures for campers to notify youth camp staff members of a suspected tick bite, proper methods of conducting tick checks, and current best practices for avoiding

exposure to ticks and other parasitic or potentially harmful insects. Prior to each camp session, this bill requires the youth camps to distribute the written materials to parents of each camper and present the oral component of the education program to each camper. Youth camp staff do not have the knowledge or expertise to develop and present a comprehensive educational program on Lyme disease. The necessity and/or appropriateness of these requirements are also questionable as many camps operate in urban settings and serve children as young as 3 years of age. This mandate could become impracticable for many youth camps due to the length and number of sessions for each camp; many camps have new sessions each week and/or have new campers arriving each day.

Section 3 of this bill mandates youth camps to develop or approve a camper injury and abuse education program consisting of written and oral components, designate a staff member as an injury or abuse resource counselor and identify this staff member's designation to each camper and describe the procedure for contacting the staff member if any camper suffers injury or abuse or suspects that a camper has suffered injury or abuse, notify the camper's parent or legal guardian or the camper's emergency contact of a report of an incident of injury or abuse, and permit campers to contact his or her parent, legal guardian or emergency contact within twelve hours of requesting to do so. It also requires youth camps to distribute the written components of the education program to the parent of each camper and present the oral component of the education program to each camper, prior to each camp session. Combining the procedures for injuries and abuse into one education program is problematic. Current statutes and regulations require camps to maintain and train staff on policies pertaining to the prevention and reporting of child abuse and neglect. Separately, camps are currently required to designate personnel who are trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation to manage the health care at the camp. Similar to a Lyme disease education program, the age of the campers and the length and number of sessions of many camps make one question the appropriateness and/or practicality of these additional requirements.

Section 4 of this bill requires youth camps to conduct state and national criminal history records checks on any director or assistant director which is employed or volunteers at the licensed youth camps, and for youth camps to recognize background checks conducted for immigration purposes not earlier than six months prior to the individual's employment or volunteering to meet this requirement. In 2013, DPH licensed over 500 youth camps and issued initial approval to 467 directors and assistant directors. Currently, there are 5,508 individuals approved as youth camp directors. The processing time for fingerprint supported background check results can range from 8 weeks to 16 weeks. Additional response time for follow up on results that indicate criminal history can also be expected. The bill does not specifically indicate who is responsible for conducting the criminal background check and necessary follow-up of background check results that indicate a criminal history. Federal law prohibits outside parties (e.g. youth camps) to conduct national fingerprint criminal background checks. Should the state licensing agency be required to process the background checks on all youth camp directors and assistant directors, significant resources would be needed for additional staffing.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's comments on this bill.

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STATE LYME HEARING 2/27/14

SB203

My name is Caye Helsley. I hold a Masters in Public Health and I have spent over 20 years in disease management for 2 large employers here in Hartford. Lyme education was my responsibility in response to the explosion of Lyme related medical claims that we were documenting. Despite that knowledge I am now a Lyme survivor – which means I have more than average damage b/c my Lyme was NOT treated in the first 4-6 month when treatment is most successful.

In my opinion, the state is contributing to an already dangerous situation by NOT having an advisory panel or ANY meaningful proactive education in the face of a *known* epidemic. Lyme is dangerous and poses an eminent threat to the residents of CT. I used to think Lyme was like strep, make people aware, treat it and move on. Now, I know it is more like MRSA, difficult to treat and down right dangerous when not treated early.

This bill is important first step because it raises awareness and educates staff and parents who are working with an at risk population ~ our children. In the absence of commonly accepted reliable testing, it is paramount that camp counselors and nurses be up to date and cautious every time a child presents with a rash, fever or flu like symptoms in spring, summer and fall. And like wise for all of the parents. MUCH LIKE THE EARLY BREAST CANCER BATTLES, EARLY DETECTION & EDUCTION IS ALL WE REALLY HAVE!!

In Summary, CT Lyme Patients are faced with an unreliable Western Blot AND no coordinated education despite living at "ground zero" for Lyme. Instead, let us work together, develop state warnings, raise awareness to match the threat, and improve early detection by both the public and physicians!

I can be reached at 860-918-4378 for any Lyme related questions.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO SEN. BARTOMELEO & DR SRINIVASAN FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO THIS GROWING PROBLEM.