

Committee on Judiciary
Testimony on Raised Bill 5211
An Act Concerning Underage Drinking
Representative Sonya Googins
31st. District-Glastonbury

Distinguished chairmen of the Judiciary Committee Sen. McDonald and Rep. Lawlor, and members of the committee, I am here once again to support the concept proposed in Raised Bill 5211 as another tool for local law enforcement officials to control underage drinking in our towns.

Glastonbury has the *distinction* of being one of the towns who introduced and put into effect an ordinance to act when discovering an underage drinking house party. We've also had the *misfortune* to have experienced too many deaths of our youth under the influence of alcohol. Parties are often the source.

Since enactment, there have been no adverse incidents when that authority was exercised according to our Town Council Chairman Susan Karp who hoped to be with us today but had a family commitment. Our Chief of Police is represented by the State Association. Both adults and youth are held accountable in this ordinance!

The observation has been that while we're sure such house parties still exist, there are fewer and they are not "spilling out into the streets" as had been the case in the past. Certainly this committee already knows that police can enter a home when called for some disturbance, but upon discovering underage drinking cannot act because it is not against the law to drink on private premises. The ordinance prohibits adults to host and youth to participate in such an activity. Our ordinance permits law enforcement officers to issue a citation and fine. The important distinction is easily made of families' social occasions versus youth parties.

You will hear compelling testimony from our Glastonbury advocates, Sheryl Sprague and Geralyn Laut and many other professional experts who will justify the prudence of enacting 5211 with startling statistics.

One fact rises above all others, more youth are killed under the influence of alcohol than all other drugs combined.

My sincere thanks for your consideration of this important issue!

Sonny Googins