

Dear Judiciary Committee Member,

As president of the Mary Byron Foundation, a public charity that supports nationwide efforts to stop domestic violence, I know that access to information is a vital concern for crime victims. My daughter, Mary, was killed by her former boyfriend in 1993 because she didn't know that he had been released from jail. Her murder led to the creation of the nation's first system of automated victim notification, here in Kentucky.

As you may know, an increasing number of states have passed legislation that calls for the creation of statewide automated victim notification systems. These systems allow every crime victim in the state to be notified when their offender is released from jail.

While 19 states have implemented statewide victim notification systems, Connecticut is unfortunately not one of them. However, **H.B. 5799** would address this need. **Therefore, on behalf of crime victims across Connecticut, please pass H.B. 5799 with the current language to create a statewide automated victim notification system.**

For the 2006 Fiscal Year, Congress has approved nearly \$9 million in funding for statewide automated victim notification systems. The Bureau of Justice Assistance within the U.S. Department of Justice has made this funding available for states to create new statewide automated victim notification systems. These programs help protect crime victims from further victimization and ensure that victims' legal rights are being upheld. By passing legislation to create a statewide victim notification system, Connecticut would become eligible for these matching funds.

I am hopeful that Connecticut will make crime victims a priority in 2006. With the availability of funding from the BJA and model systems in place throughout the country, there is really no excuse not to move forward.

We appreciate all your help!

Sincerely,



Pat Byron
President, The Mary Byron Foundation