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# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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**Testimony of James Papillo, State Victim Advocate  
Submitted to the Judiciary Committee  
Monday, March 13, 2006**

Good morning Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is James Papillo and I am the Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **SUPPORT** of:

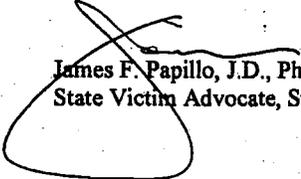
**Raised Bill No. 5615, *An Act Concerning Presentence Investigations***

In principal, I support Raised Bill No. 5615 which should work to provide valuable information to the court, and others, regarding the defendant in many more cases than the system is currently receiving. In theory, the more information the court has about a convicted criminal and the sooner such information is provided to the system, the better positioned the court will be to more appropriately determine conditions of probation and sentencing. Having such information early (1<sup>st</sup> conviction) rather than later (e.g., 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> conviction) could foster "better" outcomes from the victim and public safety perspectives. Providing such information to the criminal justice system sooner, rather than later, could (assuming the system responds appropriately to such information) have a positive impact on rates of recidivism.

Having said that, I do have some concerns that Raised Bill No. 5615 may result, in practice, in the encouragement of more plea bargaining in an attempt to manage an already overburdened probation department. The increased number of presentence investigations that would likely result under Raised Bill No. 5615, without a sufficient increase in resources needed to perform them in a timely manner, could work to the detriment of victims' interests (e.g., speedy disposition of cases and an increase in "downward" plea bargaining).

For these reasons, although I support what the Bill intends to accomplish, I would respectfully request that increased resources be appropriated to handle the increased number of presentence investigations and to provide more efficacious services to address specific problems and issues (e.g., drug addiction, mental health, etc.) highlighted in presentence investigative reports.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

  
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