



**State of Connecticut**  
**DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

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**Testimony of the Division of Criminal Justice**

*In Support of:*

**H.B. No. 7313 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

*Joint Committee on Judiciary – March 12, 2007*

**The Division of Criminal Justice respectfully requests the Committee's Joint Favorable Report for H.B. No. 7313, An Act Concerning Domestic Violence, a major component of the Division's 2007 Legislative Recommendations.** This bill represents many hours of hard work and effort on the part of public safety personnel, advocates for the victims of domestic violence and members of this General Assembly.

This bill represents a major initiative to strengthen our laws against domestic violence and to provide effective protection to the victims of domestic violence. Specifically:

- Sections 1 and 2 of the bill would allow the police to establish additional, non-financial conditions for the release of a defendant. This allows for immediate protections to be put in place without creating an entirely new system or process. The concept and language presented here represent a breakthrough after many years of discussing and debate as to how to deal with the question of providing protections during the times when the courts are closed and not available to issue protective orders. Victim advocates, police and prosecutors conducted extensive research and study of other states and other systems before agreeing to the concept presented here.
- Sections 3 and 4 represent a fine-tuning and strengthening of the existing law. Section 3 creates a felony level offense for Violation of Conditions of Release. This new offense of Violation of Conditions of Release in the First Degree would be a class D felony punishable by up to five years incarceration. We believe this change is necessary and the proposed penalty appropriate. Section 4 establishes the offense of Violation of Conditions of Release in the Second Degree, which carries the existing penalty of a class A misdemeanor.

- Section 5 expands the circumstances under which the court may issue a standing criminal restraining order. This provision is designed to strengthen the laws to protect not only those who are victims of specific offenses, but for those who are victims of any crime against a family or household member. It must be stressed that such a standing criminal restraining order could only be issued *“for good cause shown”* as required in line 126 of the bill.
- Section 6 of the bill is essentially technical. It expands the definition of “electronic defense weapon” to include stun guns and other such devices.
- Section 7 of the bill expands upon the longstanding provisions of the statutes that allow for the seizure of firearms in domestic violence cases. This section would allow for the confiscation of electronic defense weapons in addition to firearms. The logic behind this change is simple: these are dangerous weapons and can inflict serious injury or even death just as a firearm can.

The Division of Criminal Justice respectfully requests the Committee’s Joint Favorable Report for this bill. We would be happy to provide any additional information or answer any questions that you might have.

Thank you.