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Member Shelter Programs

The Umbrella
Ansonia, CT

The Center for Women & Families
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Women's Center
Danbury, CT

United Services, Inc.
Domestic Violence Programs
Dayville, CT

Network Against Domestic Abuse
Enfield, CT

Greenwich YWCA
Domestic Abuse Service
Greenwich, CT

Interval House
Hartford, CT

Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis
Meriden, CT

New Horizons
Middletown, CT

Prudence Crandall Center
New Britain, CT

Domestic Violence Services
New Haven, CT

Women's Center of SE CT
New London, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Norwalk, CT

Women's Support Services
Sharon, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Stamford, CT

Susan B. Anthony Project
Torrington, CT

Safe Haven
Waterbury, CT

United Services, Inc.
Domestic Violence Programs
Willimantic, CT

To: Judiciary Committee

From: Linda Blozie

Date: March 5, 2007

**Re: AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF PETS IN
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES**

Good afternoon Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Linda Blozie and I am the Director of Public Affairs for the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Thank you for hearing my testimony in relation to proposed Senate Bill 284: An Act Concerning the Protection of Pets in Domestic Violence Cases.

CCADV has several legislative agenda items this year. They include increasing access to domestic violence shelters, legally protecting victims when the courts are closed, funding three docket court victim advocates and identifying strangulation as a separate crime. After careful consideration, these agenda items have been identified as the priorities for victims this year.

Now having said that, I must say that it is well known that the family pet is often used as a tool for intimidation by abusers. There is a strong correlation between pet abuse and domestic violence. Victims often refuse to leave abusive situations for fear of what will happen to or who will care for their pets. To prevent victims from leaving, abusers often threaten the pet's safety as a mechanism of control. Animals can be used to intimidate children in abusive situations as well. Many victims of domestic violence are in a horrible position because abusers will make threats against their pets and carry them out. Few shelters accept animals, so women must often choose between their own safety and that of their pet because there is no system in place for anyone to accept and care for these animals.

In addition, CCADV would like to support Bill 6672, An Act Concerning Gender Specific and Trauma Informed State Services. CCADV has a trauma initiative, is well versed in domestic violence and would be happy to assist in bringing this service model to women across Connecticut.

Thank you.