

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF PROSECUTORS.

John Doyle, Vice- President

RE: R.B. 1372

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee for allowing me to testify on R.B. 1372 An Act Concerning the Penalty for Stalking a Prosecutor.

I am Assistant State's Attorney for the Judicial District of New Haven and the Vice – President of the Connecticut Association of Prosecutors. The Connecticut Association of Prosecutors is an organization made up of the 250 prosecutors who work for the Division of Criminal Justice and in the criminal courthouses throughout the state. The Connecticut Association of Prosecutors has identified this issue as one of upmost importance for Prosecutors throughout the state.

While charged with the investigation and prosecution of criminal matters in the State of Connecticut, we do so while recognizing the increasingly dangerous nature of our occupation. Prosecutors confront dangers not faced by other attorneys in state service. We risk our personal safety every time we walk into court or our offices to do our jobs. Whether gang members, sex offenders, domestic abusers, drug traffickers or persistent felony offenders we are on the front line in the war on crime. Unfortunately, some of the criminals that we have fought so hard to bring to justice have decided to attack us and our families. We have been threatened, assaulted, and have been forced to live in fear.

During the course of today's hearings you will hear from prosecutors who have had their homes bombed and have had assassins hired to kill them. You will hear from prosecutors who have been stalked and prosecutors whose families have been forced to live in fear as a result of the threats they have received. Unfortunately, the experience of these prosecutors is merely representative of what each and every prosecutor in Connecticut confronts daily.

Violence towards those charged with administering justice is steadily increasing. Many prosecutors in other states have been killed in the line of duty. This In September of 2004, the National District Attorney's Association dedicated a national memorial to prosecutors who were killed in the line of duty. While I was fortunate to have been able to attend such an important dedication in Columbia, South Carolina; it is unfortunate that our system of justice has taken such a turn as to require such a memorial.

This legislation will impose a five year penalty for an individual convicted a stalking a prosecutor on account of his or her duties as a prosecutor. In effect, it will apply to individuals who, with intent to cause a prosecutor to fear for his or her safety, he willfully and repeatedly follows or lies in wait for such prosecutor and causes such prosecutor to reasonably fear for his or her physical safety.

We ask that this Committee consider this legislation favorably before Connecticut confronts such a tragedy.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter and if you have any questions for me today or any other time, please do not hesitate to contact me.