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Good Morning Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am here to express my support for several bills on today's agenda: S.B. No. 149, AN ACT CONCERNING THE VIDEOTAPING OF CUSTODIAL INTERROGATIONS, S.B. No. 1240 AN ACT CONCERNING EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION, S.B. No. 901 AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE CONNECTICUT INNOCENCE PROJECT, S.B. No. 903, AN ACT CONCERNING LOST OR STOLEN FIREARMS, S.B. No. 904 AN ACT REQUIRING FIREARM DEALERS TO REPORT LOST OR STOLEN FIREARMS and S.B. No. 892, AN ACT CONCERNING BURGLARY..

Three of these bills would ensure greater accuracy of our judicial system.

First, I want to express my support for S.B. No. 149, AN ACT CONCERNING

THE VIDEOTAPING OF CUSTODIAL INTERROGATIONS. I have long been an advocate for the taping of custodial confessions and I believe that this procedure protects both the police and the suspects in the interrogation process. While historically law enforcement officers have viewed taping of confessions with some trepidation, once they begin the process many of them become advocates for it. If you would like more information on taping of confessions and the positive response from law enforcement I would be pleased to share with you a report from the Northwestern University School of Law, "Police Experiences with Recording Custodial Interrogation." Taping of confessions would ensure greater accuracy in our judicial system. Secondly, S.B. No. 1240 AN ACT CONCERNING EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION would improve the accuracy of eyewitness identification. Everyone involved with the criminal justice system is well aware the eyewitness identification can be a double edged sword. It is prone to stunning inaccuracy but it is also perhaps the most compelling testimony in a courtroom. Therefore, we have an obligation to ensure that this testimony is as accurate as possible. SB 1240 would achieve this by, among other things, requiring that the line-up or photographs be shown in sequential order rather than simultaneously and that, when possible, the person conducting the identification procedure should not know who in the line-up or photographs is the suspected perpetrator. Finally, S.B. 901, AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE CONNECTICUT INNOCENCE PROJECT would allow the innocence project in our state to make sure that people convicted in error have a means of redress. There is no better example of the need for the Innocence Project than the case of

James Tillman; without the innocence project Mr. Tillman would remain as the tragedy of an innocent man incarcerated. We have an obligation of extraordinary importance to be sure that the person we incarcerate is the person who in fact committed the offense.

Two bills on the agenda today address the issue of the use of lost or stolen firearms, S.B. No. 903, AN ACT CONCERNING LOST OR STOLEN FIREARMS and S.B. No. 904, AN ACT REQUIRING FIREARM DEALERS TO REPORT LOST OR STOLEN FIREARMS. I believe that vigilant pursuit and documentation of stolen or lost firearms could reduce violent crime in our state.

Federal law requires that a gun dealer report any theft or loss of firearms from inventory within 48 hours. Violation of the federal act carries a stiff penalty (5 years in prison and/or \$250,000). SB 904 would augment the federal law and make a dealer's failure to report a lost or stolen firearm a Class A misdemeanor for the first offense and a Class D felony for subsequent offenses under state law.

Unfortunately, the federal law does not apply to non-dealers and firearms "lost" by non-dealers certainly contribute to violent crime. Many guns are in fact targeted by thieves. Equally disturbing, however, is the process by which guns are moved into the illegal market by "straw purchasers" who can own guns and buy them in order to sell them to people who are prohibited from owning guns. When a gun that has been used in a crime is traced back to the

purchaser/trafficker, the purchaser claims that the gun was stolen or lost without the owner's knowledge. Prosecution of the "straw purchasers" is not possible because our laws do not require reporting of stolen firearms. S.B. No. 903 would require that a gun owner who is not in actual physical possession of the gun keep it stored in a manner that will reduce the risk of theft; it also requires that the loss or theft of a firearm be reported to a law enforcement agency. This legislation would protect our citizens from unscrupulous gun traffickers without placing unnecessary regulation on legitimate gun owners.

Finally, I would like to express my support for S.B. No. 892, AN ACT CONCERNING BURGLARY. Simply, this bill would correct an anomaly in our statutory scheme in which Burglary I carries a harsher sentence but would appear to be a less serious crime than Burglary II with a firearm. The bill would simply add the requirement that in order to be charged with Burglary I the defendant must threaten the use of or display or represent by words or conduct that such person possesses explosives or a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument. Under current law this "brandishing" element is required for Burglary II with a Firearm but not for Burglary I.

Thank you for your attention to these extraordinarily important criminal justice issues.