

Good afternoon, my name is Johanna Petit Chapman.

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I thank you for allowing us this opportunity to address the Judiciary Committee and the people of CT. I come representing my brother Dr. William A. Petit, Jr and the entire Hawke and Petit family. We understand that the tragedy that befell us last July occurred through randomness as well as a system that has placed the rights of the accused and convicted beyond those of the victims. My sister-in-law and 2 nieces were brutally murdered within their own home by two men previously convicted of nearly 40 offenses. We realize that some of the bills before us today do not directly address issues specifically germane to our situation and that some of those were addressed in the special session in January.

For that *small* step forward we thank you---however there is more to be done. We feel quite strongly that we as citizens of the state of CT need an effective **THREE STRIKES LAW**. We feel we need it for **common sense** reasons. To put it bluntly this law would apply to people who have now committed a third **violent** offense. Once again this is about **common sense**. A criminal rapes a young woman and is convicted, serves time and is paroled; often not because he deserves parole but to save money. He then commits a felonious assault, is convicted by a jury of his peers and serves time and again is paroled-given a third chance. He then invades a home, and is convicted a third time by a jury of his peers. This is a person who has forfeited his right to live in our society with the 99.99% of people who are decent and law-abiding. What is unclear or confusing about this conclusion?

To address several concerns-this is about **violent** crime and severe trauma to victims. Do any of you believe that someone who has been raped is "healed" in the time that their assailant serves in jail---for most victims I doubt it? Do you think someone who is a victim of an assault is "healed" before the assailant is let out of

jail? I know that is not true. We as a family and my brother as a father and husband have been sentenced to LIFE without his family and without any chance of "parole". To date our legal system has left the 2 accused in jail for 233 days without any real action occurring.

This bill is about **violent** crimes and **not** about race as some have heretofore suggested. We have no objections to programs and education to help prevent crime and improve the lives of those who for complex social reasons commit crimes. What we are talking about here is the other end of the spectrum. Please do not confuse the issues-they are separate and need be evaluated on their own merits. The THREE STRIKES BILL is about those who have offended society in a **violent** way three times. They just do not get it.

We realize that prosecutors and judges do not like to give up any flexibility in their ability to do their jobs. One of the bills here allows the prosecutor the chance to avoid this THIRD STRIKE if he/she will publicly go on record as to why this person deserves a 4th chance.

We thus urge this body to enact a meaningful three strikes law with the changes in the burglary statutes as well as the parole changes noted in bills 5035 and 5876. You should do this because it is the **right action** to take for the citizens of CT who are your constituents and for whom you are working. It is the right thing to do for your wives, husbands, children, family, and friends. This is not about Democrats versus Republicans versus Independents, but about doing the right thing to help protect all of us .Thank you for your time.