

Testimony of Ann Savastio

In support of HB 5875, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMS IN FAMILY RELATIONS MATTERS.

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing

Monday, March 10, 2008

Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Ann Savastio and I am here in strong support of HB 5875. I had known Jennifer Magnano for about 12 years, since her daughter, Jessica Rosenbeck, and my daughter Lauren Savastio, have been best friends. I saw or talked to Jen many times over the summer of 2007. My purpose here today is to share with you how Jen Magnano feared for her life, and rightly so.

In August of 2007, Jen became increasingly concerned about where she and her children were going to live, and where nine year-old Emily and fifteen year-old David would be going to school. They stayed at my house off and on for a couple of days, and at her dad's camp. That last week in August, they were living in my home.

Jen lived in such fear that Jen's van was kept in my garage with the door closed at all times. Her three kids were never left alone without another adult present, even though Jessica was 21. At night the blinds were always closed and Emily and David were instructed to stay in the back of the house, out of sight of the street. Several times Emily came in to say that she thought she saw a white blazer (the vehicle that Scott Magnano drove). On one occasion Emily said to me before heading outside to go on the trampoline "I will be ok Ann, I have this knife to protect myself if my dad shows up."

Obviously Jen's children were concerned, but Jen tried to keep her fears from them. Many of her phone calls were made out in the garage so that her children could not hear her frequent calls to the police in Plymouth and Torrington, and to her lawyer. She would quietly share with me the progress, or lack of progress in dealing with this difficult situation. I thought over and over again that here was a woman trying to follow the protocol in reporting abuse and fraud, and gain custody of her beloved children. Why couldn't she have done this from an undisclosed place in California, where they were relatively safe, even though they were still looking over their shoulders?

Jen also shared with me her concern that Scott had contacted one of his relatives to see if they could secure a gun for him. Although the request was denied, it was an ever-present worry for her.

It was never Jen's intention to live at the house on Scott Road in Plymouth again. She told me the following one evening: "Believe me, Ann, Scott threatened my life and informed me that if I were to try and take his house I would be leaving it in a body bag."

Ladies and gentlemen let Jen's death not be in vain. We the living must try to prevent further tragedies.

I would like to sincerely thank Representative Bill Hamsy and his staff for initiating this important bill.

Thank you for your time,
Ann Savastio