

Testimony of Lisa Aiudi

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,

Good afternoon. My name is Lisa Aiudi and I am the School to Career Coordinator at Terryville High School. I am here in support of House Bill 5875.

I know Jessica and David from Terryville High School and have worked with them in various aspects, as I am also the advisor of several clubs that they have joined. I became particularly close with David as he joined almost every club we had at the school. I noticed that on many occasions, he stayed after school until 9-9:30 at night and when questioned, he was always waiting for his ride. It seemed odd since most clubs were over by 7 pm. It also seemed odd that he could never attend any club work that met outside of school because of lack of a ride and when I offered to call his parents and suggest car pools, he adamantly refused. This went on for two years. Then one day, David disappeared. I questioned administrators and was not given any answers. Then one day he emailed me with a scrambled email address, which he explained he did so his father could not find him. He told me that "it was really bad" and they had to hide out from their father. He could not tell me where he was. He apologized for missing school activities and was worried about his friends. Students approached me soon after and had also heard from David. No one had known what had been going on with his family and everyone was worried and upset. He emailed me more messages and asked for help for his mom. He said she needed a lawyer and was very scared. They were in California. I helped him with that and his mom was so grateful. Soon they were back home but his father was not allowed to come to the school or to see him. I learned they were in hiding.

I was so relieved when Jen Magnano walked into my office with David and Emily. It was a great reunion. This was the day before she was killed. She had come to gather some items we had collected for her children to assist them as they could not go to their home to get any clothes or belongings and school was starting the next week. She hugged me over and over and told me how much I had helped her and the children. I remember her specifically saying that it was the first time in her life she felt strong. She was happy her kids could see her this way-they had never known her like this. She shone.

She also told me several times that she knew her husband was going to kill her. One of his relatives had told her that he was asked by her husband to give him his gun. He had refused and immediately called Jen to warn her. Jen was worried about the children and

where they would end up. However, she could not hide anymore. She had to protect her children. She was most worried about David as he had become her protector and she did not want him to think he had failed. Again, because she knew he was going to kill her. This was the worst because I was so close to David and that is why she told me.

The following evening Jen was murdered by her husband in front of her children and their friends.

If Jen had not had to come back to the state to fight for custody of her children, or if she could have been protected from her husband whom everyone, (police, lawyers, the courts, DCF) knew she believed he would kill her, she may be alive today. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your work and courage in making these tough decisions. We appreciate the work you do. I urge you to pass House Bill 5875.