

**To:** The Honorable Members of the State of Connecticut Committee on Judiciary

**From:** Jean M. Waggett, 14 Ledyard Road, West Hartford, Connecticut, 06117

**Re:** Raised Bill 625 - AN ACT REQUIRING NOTIFICATION OF A HOME INVASION OR RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY.

**Comments:** Though I am unable to attend the public hearing regarding Raised Bill 625 on March 12, 2008, the following comments reflect thoughts that I would present if I were there:

We all remember the sad and gruesome details, fully reported in both the local and national news, of at least two relatively recent home invasions in Connecticut that resulted in tragic multiple murders. One occurred in the home of Dr. John Haugh and his wife, Patricia, on Mohawk Drive in West Hartford, and the second at the home of Dr. William Pettit and his family in Cheshire, Connecticut. The first of these horrible events occurred in my neighborhood in West Hartford on November 1, 1996 and the second, even more brazen and horrific than the first, occurred in Cheshire just last year.

Though I did not know the victims, I share the deep sense of loss felt by everyone in their families, among their friends and in their respective communities. It is a universally shared longing that, out of respect for such loss, we should do something to prevent such tragedies; to make things better and safer in our communities.

**Raised Bill 625** represents an important legislative step toward that end, toward putting one more defensive shield between our Connecticut citizens and the frightening risks and dangers associated with home invasions.

In each of the two home invasions and multiple murders I have mentioned, according to contemporary news reports of those events, the men charged with the crimes had invaded several other homes in the same neighborhoods on the days immediately preceding the home invasions that resulted in the murders. The objective in the preceding home invasions appeared to be theft, which was accidentally thwarted on occasion, but in no case resulted in harm

to the occupants of the homes. As a result, no news reports of the earlier home invasions appeared and the surrounding neighbors and communities had no warning that such active, potential danger was in their midst. Those who ultimately suffered such great loss apparently were not aware that special precautions to safeguard their homes and families were advisable on the nights of the tragedies.

**Raised Bill 625** would require that police departments receiving notice of home invasions be required to notify the residents of communities within a half-mile radius of the risk. Assuming you received such a notification from your own police department, would you not be certain your burglar alarm was turned on, your doors locked and your garage closed? That you were a little more alert to unusual activity in your own neighborhood? That you made sure your neighbors were also aware of the risk? Yes, of course, you would. This proposed legislation is a single, simple tactic to make our communities and our lives a little more secure and comfortable, but it is an important step forward.

I respectfully urge that you support Raised Bill 625.