



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities and related developmental disabilities

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**Testimony before the Judiciary Committee**  
**Re: S.B. #608, “(Raised) An Act Concerning The Videotaping of Interrogations”**

Secretary  
Imelda Reno  
Arc of Farmington Valley  
Canton

by  
**Lynn Warner, Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut**

Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Treasurer  
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I am Lynn Warner, Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 56-year-old statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. We have 23 local chapters that provide supports, services, and advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities throughout Connecticut.

Immediate Past President  
Dawn Lazaroff  
Tri-County Arc  
Columbia

I am here today to testify in support of **Senate Bill #608, “(Raised) An Act Concerning The Videotaping of Interrogations”**, as it directly impacts individuals with intellectual disabilities who become involved with the criminal justice system.

Contributions are tax-deductible

In general, people with intellectual disabilities get by in life by trying to cover-up the fact that they even have a disability and by trying to please the people around them. And as a natural result of their disabilities, are very subject to suggestion, and can easily be persuaded and manipulated by others, especially authority figures. Police officers and detectives are the ultimate in authority figures and it stands to reason they can have a profound effect on the thoughts and actions of anyone and particularly someone with an intellectual disability – including having him or her confess to a crime they didn’t really commit.

Although I am an advocate and NOT a trained interviewer, I am sure that I could get most people with an intellectual disability to sign a confession to a crime they didn’t commit, especially if they were tired, hungry, and scared.

Formerly Connecticut Association for Retarded Citizens (CARC)

**The Arc/Connecticut, Inc. Member Chapters:** Futures, Inc., Middletown / Greater Enfield Arc / Family Options, Watertown / Arc of Farmington Valley / Friends of New Milford, Inc. / Litchfield County Arc / LOV-Arc, Westbrook / MARC, Inc., Manchester / MARC: Community Resources, Portland / Arc of Meriden-Wallingford / Arc of Greater New Haven / Arc/New London County / Options, Unlimited / Arc of Plainville / Arc of Quinebaug Valley / SARAH Inc., Guilford / SARAH Seneca Residential Services / SARAH Tuxis Residential Services / STAR, Norwalk / Arc of Southington / Tri County Arc, Columbia / Waterbury Arc / WeCAHR, Danbury

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Additionally, most juries cannot fathom that a person would ever confess to a crime he or she did not commit. And yet, many of the persons we represent and advocate for – when pressured -- would say they killed Abraham Lincoln if that was what he or she thought the interrogator wanted to hear.

Please understand that if videotaped recordings are used *the judge and jury would be able to see and hear for themselves what went on in an interrogation room.*

Please also know that The Arc of Connecticut has a strong belief regarding the conviction of Richard Lapointe, a gentleman with intellectual disabilities. We believe that if the 10-hour interrogation of Mr. Lapointe had been recorded, he would have never been sentenced to “Life Plus 60 Years” for the brutal 1989 murder of Bernice Martin in Manchester, Connecticut. We believe that the real murderer of Mrs. Martin is still running loose.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.