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**TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 5, 2009**

I appreciate the opportunity to support Senate Bill 317, An Act Concerning Fines for the Willful Violation of Provisions of the Do Not Call List.

This legislation increases the state's maximum civil fine from \$5,000 per violation to the federal maximum civil penalty of \$11,000 per violation.

Civil penalties must serve a strong deterrent effect. Under Conn. Gen. Stat. section 42-288a(g), the maximum civil penalty for making commercial solicitation telephone calls to any person whose name is on the state do not call list is the civil fine for unfair and deceptive trade practices of \$5,000. Conn. Gen. Stat. section 42-110o. Individuals who make similar calls to individuals who have registered with the national do not call list are subject to a maximum civil penalty of \$11,000.

Violations of Connecticut's law should be no less serious and should be punished no less severely than similar violations of federal law. Senate Bill 317 would provide equal treatment under federal or state law. New York recently adopted a similar provision.

I urge the committee's favorable consideration of Senate Bill 317.