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To: The Members of the Public Safety Committee

March 3rd, 2009

From: Donna Aponte, New Haven Police Department

Subject: The designation of land to be used for a Police Driver Training Facility.

September 09, 2008 was the last time that I ever saw my husband. It was also the last time that I spoke to him. I asked him to please come home on time because our baby had a doctors' appointment. "Please Come Home", was the last thing I said.

Just a couple of hours later in the early morning of September 10, 2008 my husband Dario Aponte, a New Haven police Sergeant was killed in a tragic automobile crash while responding to an emergency police call.

Police officers respond to emergencies using their lights and siren every day in every city and town in Connecticut.

Driving a Police vehicle is the one thing all police officers do more than all other tasks combined. Yet almost all police officers receive little or no training behind the wheel of an actual police vehicle.

As a widow, mother and police officer, I hope no one will ever suffer the loss that I and my two young children have experienced. I can't help but

wonder if Dariò had received the basic training this bill proposes if he would be here today, with me and his children who miss him dearly.

It is my hope the members of this committee approve this bill and move toward the construction of a Police Driver Training Facility so the risk of this occurring to anyone, police officer or citizen, will be reduced or eliminated.

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