



Greater Hartford Legal Aid

To: Appropriations Committee
From: Jill Davies, Deputy Director
Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Inc.
Date: February 18, 2009
Re: Preserving Current Funding Levels for the Domestic Violence Programs of the
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV)

Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Jill Davies. I am an attorney who has worked at Greater Hartford Legal Aid on behalf of family violence victims for more than 20 years. I am writing in support of preserving current funding levels to the state's domestic violence programs, as outlined in the Governor's budget.

Greater Hartford Legal Aid represents hundreds of family violence victims each year and our attorneys regularly work with the domestic violence programs in our area. We see first hand the difference that domestic violence shelters make in the lives of victims and their children.

By now, we all know the devastating effects of family violence on adult and child victims. Yet, what is not always understood is how difficult and complex it is to escape that violence. Connecticut's family violence laws offer victims important protections, but legal remedies alone are not enough.

For many, many victims the path to safety begins with the security and support provided by CCADV's domestic violence programs. Shelter means victims are safe and able to plan for the future. Their children can attend school, they can work without interference from a violent partner, and there is no need for the police or another trip to the emergency room. No other programs provide the advocacy and range of services that so many victims and their children need to build lives free from violence.

With all the difficult choices ahead, please do not cut the funding to domestic violence shelter programs or services to family violence victims.

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