



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities  
and related developmental disabilities

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**Testimony before The Human Service Committee**

**HB 315 AN ACT CONCERNING SEXUAL ASSAULT OF A  
DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED OR  
SEVERELY PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSON**

by

**Leslie Simoes, Assistant Executive Director/The Arc of  
Connecticut**

Good morning Senator Doyle, Representative Walker, and  
Members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Leslie  
Simoes and I am the Assistant Executive Director of The Arc of  
Connecticut, a 58-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 individuals with intellectual disabilities throughout  
Connecticut.

I am here this morning to testify in favor of:

**HB 315 AN ACT CONCERNING SEXUAL ASSAULT OF A  
DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED OR  
SEVERELY PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSON**

Section 1 of Section 53a-71 of The Connecticut State Statute details  
the different degrees sexual assault offences and felonies, adding  
language that people with disabilities will be included in this  
statute would be a huge step forward for the disability community.  
Amending the statute's definition of physical and cognitive  
"helplessness" is so important.

People with disabilities have been ridiculed, abused, assaulted,  
bullied and misunderstood for many, many years. Sexual assault  
against ANY person is despicable but horribly offensive when  
acted on individuals with disabilities.

**The Arc/Connecticut, Inc. Member Chapters:** Futures, Inc., Middletown / Greater Enfield Arc / Family Options, Watertown / The Arc of Farmington Valley /  
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Southington / Tri County Arc, Columbia / Waterbury Arc / WeCAHR, Danbury

**Affiliated with The Arc of the United States**

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The Arc commends this committee for raising this bill and urges the members of this committee to not only vote favorably but to become champions of the bill and help the advocates move it through the process.

Thank you for allowing me to speak in front of you today.