

April 2, 2011

To: Senator Eric D. Coleman: Co-Chair of the Judiciary Committee
State Representative Gerald M. Fox: Co-Chair of the Judiciary Committee
Members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Donna B. Jacobson

Re: Raised Bill # 6632
AN ACT CONCERNING THE SITING OF RESIDENTIAL SEXUAL
OFFENDER TREATMENT FACILITIES.

Thank you Co-Chair Coleman and Co-Chair Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Donna B. Jacobson and I am a member of the Montville Town Council. I am here to testify on Raised Bill Number 6632, an Act Concerning the Siting of Residential Sexual Offender Treatment Facilities.

Sections 19 and 20 of prolific Criminal Reform Act of 2008 did not include any guidelines for the siting of a residential sex offender facility. (Please see attached) Thus during the Spring Legislative Session of 2010, the passage of HB 5030 provided some criteria in which the DOC and CSSD were mandated to follow in locating the facility. Upon presentation of their evaluation in Montville, it was discovered that the data used was flawed. Thus, the ensuing legal and political battles that have raged for over eight months.

I will be the first to admit that I am neither a legal expert nor a well groomed politician. Nevertheless, I was voted into office in November 2009 with the firm belief that it was and is my responsibility to do my utmost for the best interest of my community. With this in mind, I humbly request that the members of the Judiciary Committee consider the passage of proposed Bill 6632 for it creates equitability in the siting of the sex offender facility.

No municipality in Connecticut, regardless of their size should be forced to accept a facility of this nature without the component of Legislative oversight. Additionally, it is equally important that a stringent set of definitions be proved so that there is no ambiguity in the language of the criteria. For example, the proposed Bill 6632 contains a criteria referenced as 'recreation.' Webster's Dictionary defines recreation as, "any play or amusement used to relax or refresh the body or mind." Given that definition does not a dance studio accomplish just that feat? In Montville, there is a residential neighborhood of 15-20 household that directly abuts the Corrigan-Radgowski facility to the south. Children take the bus to school from a stop approximately 50 feet from the correctional facilities entrance of Route 32. Why was that neighborhood not included in the current proposed location of the sex offender facility? Those residents have the inequitable right to a standard regarding quality of life.

In closing, I request the Judiciary Committee to pass proposed Bill 6632. Please bring a fairness and equitable process to fruition for the siting of the State's first residential sex offender treatment facility.

I thank you for your time and consideration,

Donna B. Jacobson

Sec. 19. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Correction shall contract for twelve beds in staff secure residential sex offender treatment facilities for occupancy not later than July 1, 2008. The department shall report to the Governor and the General Assembly not later than April 15, 2008, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, concerning the progress made in contracting for such beds including the number of beds contracted for as of the date of such report, the date such beds became or will become available, the number of additional beds that could become available in fiscal year 2009 and any obstacles encountered or foreseen in making such beds available.

Sec. 20. (*Effective from passage*) The Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch shall contract for twelve beds in staff secure residential sex offender treatment facilities for occupancy not later than July 1, 2008. The division shall report to the Governor and the General Assembly not later than April 15, 2008, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, concerning the progress made in contracting for such beds including the number of beds contracted for as of the date of such report, the date such beds became or will become available, the number of additional beds that could become available in fiscal year 2009 and any obstacles encountered or foreseen in making such beds available.