

**DR. & MRS. SAMUEL L. RIEGER  
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**CO-CHAIRS COLEMAN & FOX AND MEMBERS of the JUDICIARY COMMITTEE:**

**My wife Wanda and I strongly urge you to pass SB960 so that homicide survivors no longer need to be called for jury duty. Our beautiful 19 year old daughter Melanie was brutally strangled to death in our home on May 24, 1994. The trial of inmate #230602 was held approximately two years later. Until that time, neither of us had even stepped foot in a courthouse for any reason. I was called as a witness in the case although it was just to identify stolen property. Needless to say, those experiences were horrific and etched in our memories forever.**

**Since Melanie's violent death, Wanda and I have devoted our lives to improve the plight of homicide survivors specifically and crime victims in more general terms. I served as President of Survivors of Homicide for 6 years. During my tenure, I had worked to have the Judiciary Committee enact a law such as SB960. We have been called for jury duty many times. I was even subjected to the Voir Dire process. Upon questioning, I told the judge how horrible I felt having to walk into the Waterbury courthouse and, then, to be subjected to Voir Dire questioning. This is something that homicide survivors should never face. Thankfully, after I communicated Melanie's story to the judge, I was excused. It's very unlikely that homicide survivors would be asked to serve on a jury, criminal or civil. So, why place us in a position to have to re-enter the courthouse for no ultimate purpose?**

**We have experienced the ultimate tragedy; losing a child to violence. Anything may trigger your regression back to the tragedy or the trial. Certainly, the legislature and the criminal justice system should acknowledge this fact and do everything they can to prevent these horrific recalls.**

**Wanda and I strongly urge you to pass SB960 so that homicide survivors no longer need to face the prospect of having to enter the courthouse for jury selection. Thank you for your understanding and consideration and doing what's right for homicide survivors.**

**Sincerely yours,**

*Wanda & Samuel Rieger*