

**Testimony in support of  
H.B. 6615 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEFENSE  
WEAPONS**

March 23, 2011

Dear Senator Eric Coleman, Representative Gerald Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Megan Fountain, and I am a member of New Haven Against Police Brutality, a grassroots organization that assists police brutality victims. I strongly urge you to pass **H.B. 6615 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEFENSE WEAPONS**. Connecticut citizens have been killed and seriously injured by police tasers, and I urge you to take immediate action to protect us from these weapons.

The New Haven Advocate reports that nine Connecticut people have been killed by police tasers since 2005 ("Are Police To Blame For Taser Deaths?" September 29, 2010).

Amnesty International reports that "Since June 2001, more than 351 individuals in the United States have died after being shocked by police Tasers."

Several months ago, a man came to New Haven Against Police Brutality because a police officer had handcuffed him and then tasered him 4 times. The victim, Alvaro Garc3n was hospitalized because of damage to his lungs, and he has permanent scars on his neck and back. The aggressor, Officer Dennis O'Connell, has been accused of 9 instances of police brutality and misconduct by 9 different victims. However, despite 9 complaints to the Office of Internal Affairs of NHPD, the Police Department has never disciplined Officer O'Connell ("Cop Accused of Brutality — A 9<sup>th</sup> Time," New Haven Independent, January 27, 2011).

We urgently need police departments to establish rules for the use of taser guns and to discipline officers who misuse tasers. These are lethal weapons.

Respectfully submitted,

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