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January 31, 2011

Mr. Steve Palmer  
Committee Clerk  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
State of Connecticut  
Room 3800, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Mr. Palmer:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback in support of Connecticut House Bill 5174, which would require all state employees to undergo training to deal with workplace violence.

CPI is the standard-setting provider of behavior management training that equips employees to have an immediate, tangible, and lasting positive impact on the people and organizations they serve. CPI has provided training in safe behavior management, best practices, and innovative resources to organizations around the world. Through a variety of specialized offerings and innovative resources, CPI educates and empowers organizations to create respectful, service oriented, and physically and emotionally safe work environments.

Since 1980, more than six million professionals around the world have participated in CPI training programs. Our specialized offerings include *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® training, the *Prepare Training*® program, and Dementia Care Specialist training.

CPI applauds the State of Connecticut for its proactive efforts in the prevention of workplace violence. We urge the Connecticut Labor and Public Employees Committee to include best practice in the definition of workplace violence identified in Bill 5174. We explore this concept in more depth in our comments to the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

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## CPI Comments – Connecticut House Bill 5174

### AN ACT CONCERNING STATE EMPLOYEES AND TRAINING TO DEAL WITH WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

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We recently engaged in a comprehensive review of Connecticut House Bill 5174: AN ACT CONCERNING STATE EMPLOYEES AND TRAINING TO DEAL WITH WORKPLACE VIOLENCE. If passed, Bill 5174 would require all state employees to undergo training to deal with workplace violence.

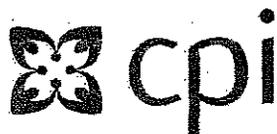
CPI applauds the State of Connecticut for its proactive efforts in the prevention of workplace violence. As this bill moves forward, we urge the Labor and Public Employees Committee to consider best practice in the definition of workplace violence identified in Bill 5174.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) acknowledges a broad definition of violence that includes many forms of physical and psychological violence and harassment at work.

The United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines violence in the workplace as a serious safety and health issue. Its most extreme form, homicide, is the fourth leading cause of fatal occupational injury in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), there were 521 workplace homicides in the preliminary count of 2009 in the United States, out of 4,349 fatal work injuries.



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CPI supports a broad definition of workplace violence because violence doesn't occur in a vacuum. Without a broad definition, our experience has been that significant issues that could be otherwise interpreted as violence may leave some employees vulnerable and victimized.

So often, guns, knives, and bombs immediately come to our minds when we think about workplace violence and harassment. This is with good reason, especially when considering the high profile events we often see unfolding worldwide every day.

However, even these forms of violence frequently occur within a context involving identifiable precursors. It is therefore imperative that we broaden our thinking about the definition of violence and harassment in the workplace.

As the graphic below illustrates, CPI asserts that these kinds of problems occur along a behavioral continuum.

**Workplace Violence Continuum of Behaviors**

- Physical Aggression
- Verbal Assault
- Retaliation
- Harassment/Bullying
- Intimidation
- Disrespect
- Discourtesy

**How Is It Defined?**  
 How does your organization define workplace violence in its policies and procedures? CPI believes workplace violence is a continuum of behaviors that includes discourtesy, disrespect, intimidation, harassment/bullying, retaliation, verbal assault, and physical aggression.

