



Testimony of The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Services
In support of HB 5031, An Act Concerning Sexual Violence on College Campuses
Tracy Guglieri, Counselor/Adult Advocate
Committee on High Education and Employment Advancement, March 6, 2012

Honorable members of the High Education and Employment Advancement committee, my name is Tracy Guglieri and I am a Counselor with The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education located in Stamford, CT. The Center provides counseling and educational services to the eight towns of lower Fairfield County. During the last fiscal year The Center has provided counseling services to 510 survivors of sexual assault. In addition to our counseling services we also provide educational programs and conferences to the communities that we service. In May of 2009, we hosted a conference for high school seniors and parents titled "Know before you go, How to be safe on College Campuses." The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education would like to offer support for **HB 5031, An Act Concerning Sexual Violence on College Campuses.**

The Campus Sexual Assault (CSA) Study surveyed two public universities over a two year period from 2005-2007. Out of the 5,446 women who participated in this study 19% reported having experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault since entering college. Since entering college 13.7% of women experienced a completed sexual assault. Two thirds of victims reported not reporting the assault to local law enforcement and just tried to avoid the perpetrator. 14% of survivors didn't even know how, where, or who to report that a crime has happened.¹ In another survey conducted by The Center for Problem Oriented Policing 10% of acquaintance rape victims on college campuses are men.²

HB 5031 has the potential to share some of these concerns by requiring that colleges and universities share information about reporting, what resources are available, and options for safety planning after an assault has occurred. This would require institutions to disclose information about their disciplinary proceedings and ensure that those conducting these proceedings are educated in issues pertaining to sexual assault. Most importantly, it would hold universities responsible to provide primary prevention and awareness programs to their new students and employees.

¹ Christopher P. Krebs Ph.D., Christine H. Lindquist, Ph.D., Tara D. Warner, MA, Bonnie S. Fisher, Ph.D., Sandra L. Martin, Ph.D., "The Campus Sexual Assault Study" Washington, DC, 2007 Document number 221153

² Benson, Charton, and Goodhart (1992)

Prevention education aims to prevent sexual violence before it occurs. Prevention does not mean telling students to stay inside at night and only giving "rape" whistles to them (which was given to me, but with no explanation). This just is not good enough. Primary prevention education will and should encourage students to examine the social norms that support violence and ask them to take an active role in its prevention. It will empower all students to step in and hold their peers accountable for words and actions that lead to violence. This prevention education has the potential to change the culture of a campus and make it a safer environment. Prevention education will also send the message to students, parents, and staff that the institution takes sexual violence very seriously. If survivors feel that their campus will respond to their assault in a fair, confidential and sensitive manner they will be more likely to reach out for support and take the necessary steps to hold their attacker accountable.

Thank you for considering this important piece of legislation. We hope that you will join us in supporting HB 5031.

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