



**TOWN OF RIDGEFIELD**  
Office of the First Selectman

MARCH 29, 2012

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SUBSTITUTE BILL - HB5360

CO-CHAIR REPRESENTATIVE FOX

CO-CHAIR SENATOR COLEMAN

MY NAME IS RUDY MARCONI, FIRST SELECTMAN OF RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT. I AM HERE TODAY TO SPEAK IN FAVOR OF HB SUBSTITUTE BILL 5360 "AN ACT PROHIBITING CERTAIN PERSONS FROM ALLOWING MINORS TO POSSESS ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR IN DWELLING UNITS AND ON PRIVATE PROPERTY".

OUR COMMUNITY, LOCATED IN FAIRFIELD COUNTY IS NO DIFFERENT THAN MOST CONNECTICUT COMMUNITIES IN OUR STATE WHEN IT COMES TO UNDERAGE DRINKING. THERE ARE PEOPLE HERE TODAY FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES AROUND OUR STATE THAT WILL CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE AND BROAD REACH OF THIS ISSUE.

AS A CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL, I CHOOSE TO PLAY A VERY ACTIVE ROLE IN OUR COMMUNITY'S WELL BEING ALONG WITH SOME KEY LEADERS OF OUR TOWN. IN 2004, AFTER THE DEATH OF A YOUNG RESIDENT DUE TO A DRUG OVERDOSE, THE RIDGEFIELD COMMUNITY COALITION AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE WAS FORMED. THE RCCASA HAS INITIATED SEVERAL PROGRAMS SINCE ITS INCEPTION AND CONTINUES TO WORK WITHIN THE COMMUNITY TO EDUCATE PARENTS AND STUDENTS ALIKE ABOUT THE POTENTIAL DEADLY OUTCOME OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE. THIS PAST AUGUST WE LOST A 16-YEAR-OLD GIRL TRAGICALLY. ALCOHOL WAS DEFINITELY INVOLVED AND WAS ILLEGALLY SERVED IN SEVERAL HOMES SHE FREQUENTED THAT DAY.

400 Main Street · Ridgefield, CT 06877  
Phone: (203) 431-2774 · Fax: (203) 431-2311 · [selectman@ridgefieldct.org](mailto:selectman@ridgefieldct.org)

[www.ridgefieldct.org](http://www.ridgefieldct.org)

I AM PERSONALLY AWARE OF FOUR TO FIVE PARTIES TAKING PLACE IN HOMES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR NOT ONLY DURING PROM SEASON BUT ALSO OVER THE HOLIDAYS, THE RESULT OF WHICH IS OVERCONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL BY MINORS, ARRESTS AND IN WORST CASE SCENARIOS, DEATHS.

IT IS TIME THAT OUR STATE BECOMES AN ADVOCATE FOR OUR NEXT GENERATION BY HELPING MUNICIPALITIES CONTROL THIS EVER-GROWING ISSUE.

WE MUST SEND A CLEAR MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND ADULTS ACROSS THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT THAT THE DISTRIBUTION OF ALCOHOL TO UNDERAGE PEOPLE IN THEIR HOMES WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. UNTIL WE TAKE THIS STEP, WE WILL CONTINUE TO LOSE THESE VERY VALUABLE YOUNG PEOPLE.

AS OUR LEGISLATURE CONTINUES TO DISCUSS AND PASS LAWS THAT INCREASE THE DISTRIBUTION OF ALCOHOL, WE MUST CONSIDER THE IMPACT THAT THIS WILL HAVE ON THE YOUNGER GENERATION. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT WE WILL NEED TO INVEST MORE IN OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING PROGRAMS, SUCH AS COPS IN SHOPS, ETC. AS A RESULT OF THESE LAWS. THE RETURNS ON THIS TYPE OF INVESTMENT WILL FURTHER THE IMPACT ON THE POLICE OFFICERS IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

IN SUBSTITUTE BILL 5360, WE ARE ASKING, AS STATED IN CHIEF JOHN ROCHE'S TESTIMONY, THAT YOU MODIFY LANGUAGE THAT WILL ALLOW LOCAL POLICE AUTHORITIES TO TAKE ACTION THAT WILL SEND A VERY CLEAR MESSAGE TO THE MANY HOMES IN OUR STATE THAT ADULTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO HIDE BEHIND THE CLAIM OF IGNORANCE WHEN IT COMES TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF ALCOHOL TO MINORS. PLEASE—WE NEED YOUR HELP.

RUDY MARCONI  
FIRST SELECTMAN