

Testimony of Jennifer Wenderoth
In Support of HB 5031, An Act Concerning Sexual Violence on College Campuses
Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement, March 6, 2012

Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Jennifer Wenderoth. I am the Campus Advocate for the New Britain and Hartford Sexual Assault Crisis Services, a program of the YWCA New Britain. I am writing to you, not only from a professional stand point but a personal one as well, that being in total support of HB 5031 An Act Concerning Sexual Violence on College Campuses.

While a student at Central Connecticut State University I became a victim of Sexual Assault. Besides from the help I received from of the schools Women's Center there was a lack of support and guidance offered from Central Connecticut. I had no clue where I could get help on trying to see my perpetrator brought to justice, this was something I had to find out on my own. Through my own dedication and determination to see that my perpetrator be held accountable, I faced many obstacles and eventually hit the point where was nothing more I could do.

During the time of my assault, Central Connecticut had a 90 day policy in effect, that gives the school only 90 days to take any disciplinary action against the perpetrator, and this was something I was not aware of. I stayed on top of the school's police department who was handling my case and believed them when they said they would be sending my paperwork over to the school's judicial office and they would take over and now be responsible for any disciplinary actions. I waited two weeks never heard anything. Summer came and went and still nothing. I went back to Central Connecticut in the fall and I contacted the judicial department because the police said they were no longer involved. When I met with judicial they said they were never sent my paper work and since the school was closed over the summer, the 90 day policy took over and nothing could be done. On top of all of this, when I requested the paperwork regarding my assault I was told that it could not be found, Central Connecticut had lost all the information about my sexual assault including the report from my evidence collection kit. The school would not do anything because the 90 was over, and I could not do anything on my own since I no longer could get my information.

I spent the rest of my time at Central Connecticut watching over my shoulder. My perpetrator was allowed to follow me around campus, sit two tables away from me in the café, hang out outside my dorm room at all hours of the night, and experience a normal college life, while I lived one in terror and fear 24/7.

Today while I advocate for college victims of sexual assault, the 90 day policy may no longer be in effect, but there are many obstacles that stand in the way for them to be able to receive the support, guidance and direction that is needed for justice and recovery. HB 5031 can make difference in so many victims' lives, it will allow them to know about the procedures a head of time, to know how to seek justice against their perpetrator, to keep their identity confidential, to know that they are not alone. This will allow them to

finish out their college education without living in fear. It will allow them to move from victim to survivor.

I thank you for time and I hope you join me in the support HB 5031 as it is a life changing piece of legislation.

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