



Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc.

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Testimony of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services

In Support of HB 6571, AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE FOURTH DEGREE AND KIDNAPPING IN THE FIRST DEGREE WITH A FIREARM

Anna Doroghazi, Director of Public Policy and Communication
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing, Monday, March 11, 2013

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee: my name is Anna Doroghazi, and I am the Director of Public Policy and Communication for Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS). CONNSACS is the coalition of Connecticut's nine community-based sexual assault crisis services programs, which provide sexual assault counseling and victim advocacy to men, women, and children of all ages. During our last fiscal year, advocates throughout the state provided hospital and court accompaniment, support groups, individual counseling, 24/7 hotline support, and post-conviction services to over 7,000 victims and survivors of sexual violence.

We would like to express our support for HB 6571, *An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission with Respect to Sexual Assault in the Fourth Degree and Kidnapping in the First Degree with a Firearm*. Under current statute, a person is guilty of sexual assault in the fourth degree when such person "*intentionally* subjects another person to sexual contact" under certain conditions outlined in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of Sec. 53a-73a; in subdivisions (2-9) of the same subsection, there is no requirement for an actor to act "*intentionally*." This discrepancy is confusing and unnecessary. It is also redundant: for this section, "sexual contact" means "any contact with the intimate parts of a person...for the purpose of sexual gratification of the actor or for the purpose of degrading or humiliating such person." This requirement to act with purpose eliminates the need to additionally specify that an actor must act intentionally. By removing the word "*intentionally*" from subdivision (1) of subsection (a), HB 6571 will eliminate redundant language and bring consistency to the section.

Thank you for your consideration.

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