Testimony Supporting
H.B. No. 6676 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT LONGEVITY INITIATIVE ON A STATE-WIDE BASIS.
Khaliyl Lane
Judiciary Committee
April 1st, 2013

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, distinguished members of the judiciary committee:

I am a graduate student in the University of Connecticut's Masters in Social Work program. I am originally from Hartford, Connecticut.

I am here in front of you today in support of House Bill No. 6676. As a social worker and a member of the Hartford community I endorse the Project Longevity Initiative and its goal to reduce violence in our neighborhoods. The community-based approach provided by Project Longevity Initiative is vital in empowering communities from within against gun/gang violence that is becoming more prevalent every year. I grew up in these communities and I can assure you that change must come from within and this starts with community members and law enforcement working together to combat violence.

The implementation of the Project Longevity Initiative will ensure the continued development of communication between state officials and the communities they serve. The evidence-based support of the program can be found in its success when implemented in other cities around the United States such as Boston and Chicago for example. This is not to suggest that what has worked in other cities around the country will work for all. Violence in our communities will not be cured through a "one-size fits all" approach but rather in the dedicated work of people that know and genuinely care about a community. Furthermore, in a program that takes the time to develop more effective measures to identify those that are suitable for the Project Longevity Initiative as well as remains aware and empathetic of the array of challenges faced by members of this demographic.

Personally speaking I know many people who have been affected by violence in the communities that the Project Longevity Initiative wishes to serve. This is why I am here today to provide my support towards implementing a State-Wide Project Longevity Initiative in Connecticut. Through the continued collaboration of law enforcement, state officials and community members I am confident that we can begin to take back our neighborhoods and ensure safety for the men, women and children that reside there. To conclude the Project Longevity Initiative provides people with a history in violence the opportunity to change; we must pass House Bill No. 6676 and continue on the road towards reducing violence in our great state.

Khaliyl Lane
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