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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY
OFFICE OF THE VICTIM ADVOCATE
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**Testimony of Garvin G. Ambrose, Esq., State Victim Advocate
Submitted to the Judiciary Committee
Monday, April 15, 2013**

Good day Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Garvin Ambrose and I am the Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning:

Raised House Bill No. 6691, An Act Concerning the Issuance of a Written Complaint and Summons for the Commission of a Misdemeanor or Violation.

The Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) must OPPOSE the proposal as it will dramatically jeopardize victim and public safety. I strongly urge the Committee to REJECT Raised House Bill No. 6691.

The proposal to require that a written complaint and summons be issued for any person arrested for the commission of a misdemeanor, without processing the complaint and summons at the police department, if such person has provided proper identification, is far too broad and will place victims and the public at risk, especially in cases of domestic violence.

Many domestic violence offenses, classified as misdemeanors, include Assault 3rd; Threatening 2nd; Reckless endangerment 1st; Strangulation 3rd; Sexual assault 4th; Unlawful restraint 2nd; Criminal trespass 1st & 2nd; Stalking 2nd; Interfering with an emergency call; and Violation of conditions of release 2nd, and are only a small fraction of the crimes included in the proposal. As proposed, law enforcement would no longer have the ability to issue conditions of release upon an offender arrested for any misdemeanor, including conditions that would protect a victim of domestic violence.

It is a well known fact that one of the most dangerous times for a victim of domestic violence is when there is law enforcement intervention. The proposal will likely force many more victims of domestic violence and their children into shelter as they will no longer have the security of knowing that they are safe in their own home. Even worse, victims of domestic violence may decline to notify law enforcement at all in fear that doing so will place them and their children in greater danger.

Law enforcement are the front line responders to criminal activity and are in the best position to determine whether an offender should be released on a promise to appear or be required to secure his/her release through a bond, depending on the nature and severity of the offense, as well as whether any conditions of release should be imposed upon the offender to protect any victim of the offense. There are already appropriate procedures in place for the review of bonds by bail

commissioners upon an offender's arrest and inability to post bond, so that offenders are not unfairly held on bond.

For these above reasons, I strongly urge the Committee's rejection of Raised House Bill No. 6691.

Thank you for consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garvin G. Ambrose", written over a horizontal line.

Garvin G. Ambrose, Esq.
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