

Good Day Public Health Committee Members!

Attached to this email is electronic testimony on behalf of the Institute of Violence Prevention & Reduction at the University of Connecticut, School of Social Work. This document supports the protection of citizens facing homelessness.

Thank you.

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Support of HB 6572 & SB 896: Violence Against the Homeless

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA—March 11, 2011

John Rutledge, a tile-worker who had been laid off the previous year, was on his way to a homeless shelter when he was assaulted by four men. He sustained multiple injuries during the attack, including a fractured jaw and severe lacerations to his lips and mouth. The perpetrators also stole \$60 from him.

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA—March 30, 2011

On March 30th, Tommy Leadbetter, 46, held a 26-year-old homeless woman captive in his house for many hours. During this time, he beat and tortured her. The police found the young woman walking through a neighborhood with lacerations and bruising on her head, chest, and arms. She was then treated at a local hospital. Leadbetter was arrested about a week later and was charged with torture, assault, and robbery.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA—April 22

Four young people severely beat a homeless man, 50, after attempting to rob him. The man was pistol-whipped and stabbed in the cheek by two of the men, one of whom was between the ages of 25 to 30. Then, another man and a woman set his tent on fire.

DAVENPORT, IOWA—July 31, 2011

Melvin Gott, 57, was sleeping on a park bench when he was attacked by Frankie L. Sird, 27. Sird put a knife to Gott's throat and demanded money. When Gott tried to pull the knife away, he was punched by another assailant who had approached from behind. Sird proceeded to kick Gott in the face with steel-toed boots. The attackers ran off when an ambulance arrived in response to a witness's 911 call. The victim needed stitches for the slashes on his neck, and the beating left him blind in one eye.

