

**Testimony of Jennifer Wenderoth  
In Support of HB 5029, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault and  
Intimate Partner Violence on Campus  
Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement, February 11, 2014**

Members of the committee, my name is Jennifer Wenderoth and I am the College Advocate for the Rape Crisis Center of Milford. I am writing to you not only as an Advocate but as a survivor of sexual assault, in total support of HB 5029, An Act Concerning Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence on Campus.

While as a student at Central Connecticut State University I became a victim of sexual assault.

Unfortunately I was never told about my rights as a victim and the only support I received from the University was from the women's center.

While trying to fight for justice, I faced an uphill battle from the University that ended when I was notified that paperwork along with the results of my evidence collection kit was lost, and there was nothing I could do. It was not until 2012, eight years after I was assaulted, did I finally get my report. But it was too late, the statute of limitations had passed, I had already spent the rest of my college education living in fear, before finally graduating and going on to help other victims of sexual assault.

For the last 4 years I have worked as a College Advocate in different areas of Connecticut and have had the chance to work with multiple Colleges and Universities. I been counseling and advocating for victims of sexual assault and making sure the nightmare I went through, when trying to see my perpetrator brought to justice, is never repeated. I have been able to see what information and policies are put in place, and if it is made available for victims of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. I have also witnessed how these victims are treated by the institutions, and if their rights are taken away.

Today I work alongside the University of New Haven. I am extremely pleased to see that there is a university that has implemented policies to inform a victim of their rights and options and where to access the information. The university educates students and staff about issues pertaining to sexual assault and intimate partner violence, and where they can receive help on and off campus. Most importantly these victims are given a choice and no matter what, they are provided with support. But sadly, I know this is not the case today with all universities and colleges in the state of Connecticut.

While a lot of progress has been made, there is still a lot that can be done to help today's victims of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. As a former victim of sexual assault and a forever survivor and advocate I hope you all will join me in supporting HB 5029.