

## Testimony regarding

### **AN ACT PROVIDING NOTICE TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF A MUNICIPALITY UPON THE RELEASE OF A REGISTERED SEXUAL OFFENDER INTO SUCH MUNICIPALITY, raised bill No. 432**

Wednesday, March 12, 2014  
Judiciary Committee

Submitted by Ellen Scalettar, First Selectman, Town of Woodbridge.

Good afternoon. My name is Ellen Scalettar and I am the First Selectman of the Town of Woodbridge. I am here today to testify in connection with Raised Bill No 432, “An Act Providing Notice to the CEO of a Municipality Upon the Release of a Registered Sexual Offender into such Municipality.”

This bill would require the state to email the first selectman and school superintendent of a town when a registered sex offender will be released to that community. Notice to a town could be helpful and I support notice to the mayor or first selectman.

Today, however, I would like to focus on a related but different issue. I respectfully request that this proposed bill include a provision to alert municipal CEOs of the standards, rules and regulations that govern specific state-funded halfway houses in their towns when a sex offender is in residence. In Woodbridge, a group of residents became concerned after checking the online sex offender registry. They learned that two mentally disabled pedophiles were living in a state-funded halfway house near a school bus stop in their neighborhood. Many of these residents have children and they are naturally concerned for their safety.

I understand the importance of state and federal laws that protect the mentally disabled from housing discrimination. I also understand the importance of HIPAA laws that protect medical records from being disclosed. I do not see, however, that either of those protections outweigh – nor should they preclude – providing reassurance to residents about the safety and security procedures in place at the state-funded facilities in their neighborhoods. Since the identities of sex offenders and their place of residence are already available online, surely the security rules in place at the residence does not merit greater privacy protection.

The residents living near the convicted pedophiles have unsuccessfully requested this information from the Department of Developmental Services; these residents have no idea how long these three convicted pedophiles or their successors will live in their neighborhood. They have no idea what rules—if any—the halfway house requires of them. And, if there are rules, the residents have no idea if the rules are actually followed.

We have many laws that protect the sexual predators living in our neighborhoods and across the state. Surely, it is equally important to protect our residents and their children by providing them with critical information so they can make informed decisions to keep their families safe.

Thank you for your consideration of this important amendment to SB 432.