

Henry and Dawn Kopel  
21 Richard Sweet Drive  
Woodbridge, CT 06525

September 26, 2013

To our elected representatives:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with representatives of our neighborhood.

As parents of school-age children, we most strongly oppose the State of Connecticut's act of having placed a group home for convicted, felony sex offenders in the middle of our neighborhood, surrounded by families with young children.

The group home is located at 4 Old Still Road in Woodbridge. Our home, with two public-school children, is less than a block away. Within two blocks of the group home are families with a total of at least 28 children, ages 1 to 17. Most of these children, like ours, get on and off a public school bus mornings and afternoons in the neighborhood streets.

Presently two registered sex offenders reside in the group home. Per the state's sex offender registry, one of the residents was convicted in May 2008 of four felony sex offense crimes, based on his having digitally raped two young girls, ages 5 and 7. The other resident was convicted in December 1983 of 1<sup>st</sup> degree sexual assault, and in May 1997 of two felony crimes involving sexual assault of a child.

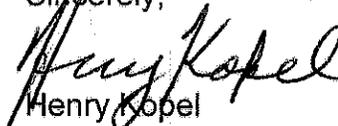
Beyond the fact that this group home siting decision was made with no clear notice to or discussion with the neighborhood families whose children bear virtually all the risks of the sex offenders' criminal temptations, we believe this siting decision is entirely and inexcusably wrong as a matter of public policy. It is primarily wrong with respect to our neighborhood children who are placed directly at risk of a horrible and life-damaging sexual assault. But it is also wrong for the offenders and the criminal justice system, whose goals must certainly include rehabilitation, and minimizing the temptations to re-offend. Criminal courts routinely require that convicted sex offenders, upon release from prison, stay away from locations involving large concentrations of children. Siting this group home at 4 Old Still Road runs directly contrary to the wisdom and practice of the criminal courts.

There are doubtless plenty of residential locations in the State of Connecticut where, unlike this neighborhood, the households are primarily adults without children. That would be a far more prudent location for a group home of this type – both to avoid the grave risks to children, and to reduce the temptations and consequent likelihood that the home's occupants will commit new crimes.

We respectfully request that those having the authority and responsibility for this group home siting decision be required promptly to find an alternative location, and then relocate the offenders.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Henry Kopel

On behalf of Henry & Dawn Kopel