



Testimony in Support of

SB 462, AAC Civil Restraining and Protective Orders

Judiciary Committee

March 17, 2014

Good morning Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the committee. My name is Magda Moraes and I serve as a Family Violence Victim Advocate with Prudence Crandall Center, Inc. Established in 1973, Prudence Crandall Center is the oldest domestic violence program in CT and the second oldest nationwide. Today, we are one of only a few agencies in the nation offering the continuum of shelter, housing and support services needed to meet the complex needs of victims, helping them move forward to safe, self-sufficient lives, free of violence.

I am here to **urge your support of Senate Bill 462**, which will provide critical financial protections for victims of domestic violence through civil restraining orders by allowing judges to order abusers to continue to provide financial support to their victims.

I have dealt with a client not too long ago who has filed for a Restraining Order (RO). The judge did grant the RO and a full one went into effect for a period of one year. About a month later I received a call from the victim who had concerns as she did not receive any financial support from the defendant since the RO went into effect. She had two small children in the home and she was a stay at home mom. The defendant has also emptied the checking and savings account and left the victim with no financial assistance. She was very distraught and did not know what to do as she was borrowing money from her parents in order to buy groceries and pay for the bills. She had safety concerns in this matter; however she was considering dropping or modifying the RO to allow her husband back in the home because of her financial struggles. She has tried communicating through a third party with the defendant to ask him for support at least for the children; however he refused and told her that he will not help her unless she drops the RO.

It is never acceptable to ask a victim to choose between her immediate safety and economic survival. The protections provided in Senate Bill 462 would allow the victim to obtain the necessary financial support from her abuser to separate and get back on her feet. Instead, because of the way our system currently work, her abuser is able to use money as a way to continue manipulating her and jeopardizing her safety.

Again, I urge your support of Senate Bill 462.

Thank you for your consideration.

Magda Moraes
Prudence Crandall Center, Inc.