



**Susan B. Anthony Project**  
SAFETY • HEALING • GROWTH

179 Water Street  
Torrington, Connecticut 06790  
860-489-3798  
www.sbaproject.org

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**Executive Director**  
Barbara Spiegel

Testimony from Susan B. Anthony Project  
regarding  
Funding for Rape Crisis Services.

March 6, 2015

To: Senator Bye and Representative Walker  
Appropriations Committee

From: Barbara Spiegel  
Executive Director  
Susan B. Anthony Project

Susan B. Anthony Project (SBAP) is one of the member programs of Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services (ConnSacs)--the state's leading voice for victims of sexual assault.

Susan B. Anthony Project provides free, confidential services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for approximately 250 victims of sexual assault each year. Last year, 120 of these victims were children. Services include 24-hour crisis response, counseling, support groups, and advocacy.

**The nine Rape Crisis centers throughout Connecticut are the only providers whose services are tailored to meet the need of survivors of sexual assault and their families.** For example, we have staff who specialize in working with children who have been sexually abused. We also work with parents of children and teens who have been victimized. These services are available free and 24/7 and are essential to the well-being of people who have experienced trauma that if not addressed can seriously affect them for the rest of their lives.

Susan B. Anthony Project's service area includes the following towns: Barkhamsted, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, Washington, and Winchester.

**I'm writing to urge you to continue funding the Rape Crisis services at this same level as FY 15.** Even with this level of funding, supplemented by Susan B. Anthony Project's own fundraising efforts, we're not always able to meet the many varied needs of all the survivors who come to SBAP for assistance and support.

**SBAP's involvement at Northwestern Connecticut Community College and the University of Connecticut Torrington branch has increased as we address the campuses' response to sexual assault and train campus staff in the appropriate and timely response.**



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The following is an **example of just one of the people we've helped** in the last few months. If we experience a funding cut in the coming year, we may need to reduce staff hours which would dramatically diminish our ability to address our clients' needs.

*The client is a 15 year old female, from rural northwestern Connecticut, who was sexually assaulted in November. She was severally traumatized from the sexual assault and has had many struggles since that time.*

*Initially, the young woman did not want to speak to anyone or go into any type of therapy, but after meeting with the SBAP child advocate after her forensic interview, she was comfortable enough to start coming in regularly to meet with the SBAP child advocate. After about a month, the SBAP child advocate gained the young woman's trust enough that she accepted the referral for therapy at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital's outpatient services at the Center for Youth and Families.*

*The SBAP child advocate continues to work with the young woman and her grandmother (legal guardian) as well as collaborating with her therapist. In addition, the SBAP child advocate advocated for the client at school to help her get special accommodations while she was working through her trauma. Today, the client no longer needs the special accommodations.*

*The client has come a long way in a very short time—directly related to the services at SBAP and the referrals and networking coordinated by SBAP.*

*The girl's grandmother has reported many times that she was having a really hard time getting her granddaughter's needs met through the school and SBAP's advocacy was instrumental in helping them through a very hard time.*

Thank you for accepting this testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.