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Testimony in Support of
HB 5793: An Act Establishing Safe Haven Day
Government Administration and Elections Committee
February 25, 2015

Good Afternoon, Senator Cassano, Representative Jutila, Senator McLachlan, Representative Smith, and distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 5793, An Act Establishing Safe Haven Day.

The goal of this piece of legislation is to designate April 2 as Safe Haven Day. It is designed to call attention to and raise awareness of the Connecticut law that allows any mother who for any reason cannot keep a newborn to surrender her baby safely and anonymously to a hospital emergency room with no questions asked.

Designating a Safe Haven Day will help raise awareness of the law to a new generation of people who were too young to hear about it when it was first passed. It is important that these often vulnerable young women, who must be experiencing terrible distress, know they have an option to surrender a baby safely whom they otherwise cannot care for. This law truly creates a safe haven – both for the baby, and for the mother.

According to statistics from DCF, 23 infants have been surrendered under the law's protections since its implementation in October of 2000. Unfortunately, since that time, four babies have been found abandoned and were rescued, and a further two have died after being abandoned. Greater awareness of the Safe Haven law can save lives. I thank the Committee for its serious consideration of this bill.