



CONNECTICUT COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Member Organizations

The Umbrella Center for
Domestic Violence Services
Ansonia, CT

The Center for Family Justice
Bridgeport, CT

Women's Center
Danbury, CT

Domestic Violence Program
United Sages
Dayville, CT

Respect Against Domestic
Abuse
Enfield, CT

Domestic Abuse Services
Greenwich YWCA
Greenwich, CT

Interfaith House
Hartford, CT

Shelden Wallingford Chrysler
Meriden, CT

Good House
Middletown, CT

Connecticut Coastall Center
New Britain, CT

Connecticut League for
Domestic Violence Services
New Haven, CT

Life Choices
New London, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Norwalk, CT

Women's Support Services
Sharon, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Stamford, CT

Domestic Violence Project
Torrington, CT

Life Choices
Waterbury, CT

Domestic Violence Program
United Sages
Willimantic, CT

Testimony in Support of

HB 5848, AAC Women Re-entering the Workforce

Labor and Public Employees Committee February 17, 2015

Good morning Representative Tercyak, Senator Winfield, and members of the committee. CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is the state's leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those agencies that serve them. Our members provide essential services to nearly 50,000 victims of domestic violence each year. Services provided include 24-hour crisis response, emergency shelter, safety planning, counseling, support groups and court advocacy.

We urge your support of HB 5848.

As you know, domestic violence is widely perceived as a way for abusers to maintain power and control over their victims, who are most often women (roughly 4 out of 5 domestic violence victims are female). As such, abusers perceive victims' sustained employment as a serious threat to their control. Preventing employment becomes a priority for some, and abusers may use many tactics to force victims to quit or lose their jobs. Some of these strategies include forcibly preventing victims from getting to work through physical restraint or visible bruising, calling victims or showing up at their workplace excessively, and physically beating victims after work as punishment. These strategies are often successful, resulting in victims leaving their jobs (out of shame, embarrassment, or fear for their personal safety) or being fired by their employer.

If victims were not allowed to work or were forced to leave employment, it is very hard for them to re-enter the workforce. Research shows that 98% of domestic violence victims experience some kind of financial abuse in which their abuser restricts access to money and other resources, including access to education and training. In some cases, abusers will even restrict their victims from meeting the necessary requirements for welfare. These tactics leave victims dependent on their abusers and lacking in the resources they need to re-enter the workforce. It is therefore crucial that, as they leave or attempt to establish independence from their abusers, women have access to outside resources and training programs that allow them to gain the skills and experience they need to re-enter the workforce and support themselves and their children.

We strongly encourage you to support this legislation to establish a workforce re-entry program focused on women. The development of such a program could have a drastically positive impact on the futures of domestic violence victims across the state. Thank you for your consideration.

Sarah Johnson
Intern
UConn MSW '16

For questions, please contact Liza Andrews, Director of Public Policy & Communications, at 860.282.7899 or landrews@ctcadv.org