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Testimony on behalf of the UConn Undergraduate Student Body  
IN SUPPORT OF RB966, AN ACT CONCERNING SEXUAL ASSAULT FORENSIC  
EXAMINERS AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.  
Before the Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement

Members of the committee: thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of an Act Concerning Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners at Institutions of Higher Education. As a senator for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in the University of Connecticut's Undergraduate Student Government, I have witnessed firsthand the depth of work and sensitivity the UConn student community has fought to bring to our campus on the issues of sexual violence and bystander intervention. Throughout the past year, we have held round table discussions with campus police and Title IX officers, numerous outreach events, a diverse array of guest speakers, we explored the merits of consent education in public schools, and we continue exploring resources to address and bring an end to any culture that enables sexual violence, especially at educational institutions where students come to learn and develop as members of a community.

While we work to bring an end to this culture, we are forced to acknowledge the pressing and sad truth that sexual violence is happening every day- to our classmates, and disproportionately, to women- our friends, sisters, mothers and daughters. In supporting survivors as Connecticut residents and students, we ask you to adopt the revisions to the general statutes as laid out in this bill, revisions that would allow for survivors to be examined and for evidence to be collected within in the relative comfort of a health care facility at their institution, as opposed to taking a likely traumatizing and unnecessary ambulance ride to one of few accommodating hospitals.

The United States Justice Department's National Institute of Justice estimates that one in five women is sexually assaulted in college. Even still, a large percentage of sexual violence continues to go unreported. As we and future generations of Connecticut students work towards establishing a safer culture on college campuses, our advocacy means much less in the fight towards equal and feminist justice without the support of the law and general statutes in our state. By amending the Connecticut general statutes to support and provide immediate care to survivors of sexual violence, we greatly improve the chances that more incidents will be reported and handled appropriately, and that the culture may continue to change in our image - for justice.

Thank you for your time and consideration; please see to it that an Act Concerning Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners at Institutions of Higher Education be passed.