



BILL FINCH
Mayor

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Committee on Judiciary
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: S.B. 1087: An Act Concerning Sexual Offender Registration Laws, Residency Restrictions for Registered Sexual Offenders, and Reentry Housing.

Thank you Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am here to support this bill.

In Bridgeport, we're doing everything we can to make sure our kids and families are safe, and I'm happy to say it's working. Crime in our state's largest city is at historic lows and we've experienced a more significant drop in crime than any other city our size in New England.

There are many reasons for this, but I'll just name a few. First, we're working closely with the community, closely with the police department, and closely with the City Council. We're also giving those re-entering our community a second chance through programs like Project Longevity. And finally, we're benefiting from economic investments that are creating jobs across the city, bringing in new businesses and revitalizing neighborhoods.

But there is still more we can be doing to protect our state's most vulnerable. Sexual violence is an issue we grapple with all across America, including in Connecticut. One in five Connecticut residents will experience sexual assault during their lifetime, including over [one in four women](#).

We need to think of more ways we can strengthen our laws to protect children, families, and women. This bill accomplishes that.

Senate Bill 1087 proposes several positive reforms and would require convicted sex offenders to reside at least 1,000 feet away from schools and childcare centers. This is just common sense.

It would call for a more detailed sex offender registry, including the creation of a tiered-system and information on what led to the conviction of the sex offender. This would allow community members to determine the severity of the offense and see who may be most at risk of a future assault. Proper precautions could then be taken.

It would also call for tougher penalties on those who hurt children and the elderly, two of our most vulnerable populations. Tougher penalties would better serve society justice and also serve as a future deterrent.

Protecting our children and families should be our top priority in Connecticut, and this bill is about just that. We need to strengthen Connecticut's sexual offenders laws, and I respectfully ask the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Finch". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Mayor Bill Finch
Bridgeport, Connecticut