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February 19, 2016

Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Testimony in Support of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Alicia Kinsman and I write today to support of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women. I am the Director & Managing Attorney of the Legal Services program at the International Institute of Connecticut, Inc. (IICONN), a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to the needs of immigrants, refugees, and foreign born victims of serious crimes. Collectively, its programs empower foreign born, low income families, so that they may become self-sufficient and integrated members of their communities.

Since 2006, IICONN has assisted survivors of trafficking residing in the state of Connecticut through a partially federally funded aftercare program named Project Rescue. Project Rescue provides a unique array of culturally competent and trauma-informed legal and social services to survivors and works to raise awareness of human trafficking among social service agencies, law enforcement, first responders, and the general public. Through this work, IICONN has worked closely with PCSW—IICONN holds an appointed position with the Trafficking in Persons Council (TIP Council), which is chaired and convened by PCSW.

Through the TIP Council, PCSW works with governmental and nongovernmental organizations throughout the state, convening stakeholders with diverse backgrounds, gathering their expertise, and then developing recommendations to strengthen state and local anti-trafficking policy. This work is vital. It ensures that survivors of human trafficking here in Connecticut have a voice in the state legislature. It ensures that trafficking survivors have a chance at justice. And perhaps most importantly, it ensures that survivors of trafficking can rebuild a life of dignity here in our state, as we work to eradicate this horrendous crime.

On behalf of IICONN and the individuals we serve each year, I thank you for your time and for your continued support of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.

Alicia R. Kinsman, Esq.
Director & Managing Attorney, Legal Services