



**The Center for
Family Justice**

Testimony Regarding
Appropriations Committee Meeting
February 18th, 2016
Governor's Budget Proposal

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

CHAIRPERSON:

Judy Stevens,
Attorney, State of CT

Ann E. Clark, PhD
Community Leader

Donna Craft
Community Leader

Fentyshia Daniels
Social Worker

Valerie Foster
Marketing Consultant, Editor, Writer

Jessa Francis
Sikorsky Aircraft

Catherine Gallagher
Community Leader

Thomas A. Gallo
Sikorsky Aerospace Services

Maurice Hill
Community Leader

Anthony Iannini
GE Capital

Karen Izzo
Community Leader

Patricia Johnson
Pirney Bowes, Inc.

Rachel Volkman Kushel
Attorney, Robinson & Cole

Robert Larson
Community Leader

Nancy Lessard
Community Leader

Kathryn Maiolo
Community Leader

Joseph Marrone
St. Vincent's College

Debra Menich
Community Leader

Donna Milne
First Niagara, Private Client Services

Janet Navon
Community Leader

Matthew C. Reale
Attorney, Anthony & Reale

Veronica F. Thomas
Educator

Lisa M. Todd
Community Leader

Carly J. Yearsley
Community Leader

PRESIDENT, CEO:

Debra A. Greenwood

Senator Bye and Representative Walker,

The Center for Family Justice is one of nine community based member programs of the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence. The Center and other rape crisis agencies in the state provide counseling, crisis intervention, advocacy, and other necessary support services to survivors of sexual assault. A decrease in funding would severely impact the free and confidential services that are provided statewide through 24 hour hotlines and community based advocates. The rape crisis agencies also provide prevention education to students K-12 and college aged students.

Here is a client story provided by a sexual assault crisis advocate that illustrates the services provided and the necessity to keep the rape crisis line item:

A 29-year-old sexual assault client was receiving in-home services for a disability. She was on life support since infancy and will continue for her remaining years of life. This client can only move two of her fingers, and therefore can only communicate with the aid of a special hardware and software system attached to her computer. This apparatus has been broken since before her sexual assault incident, and therefore this client has had no means of communication with the exception of her eyebrows or blinking. This client received services through the sexual assault crisis agency due to verbal and emotional trauma inflicted by a temporary male home care provider who said sexually inappropriate comments towards her and masturbated in front of her. This client communicated her assault the next day to her mother and other family members. The sexual assault victim advocate provided counseling services with this client by means of breaking down conversation, word for word, letter for letter, by the client using only eye brow and lid movement for confirming each letter of the alphabet to complete each word. This client has an enormous capacity for patience, motivation, and determination. This client and worker advocated for more client independence and healing by using grounding sensory skills, mental visualization and processing exercises, and goals for being more assertive with requesting verbal feedback from supporters. The advocate also strongly advocated for a charitable organization in the area to assist The Center in paying for the client's new communication system so that she can communicate more effectively with others. The advocate continued to work with the client and the family as well as the State's Attorney who is on the prosecution and license removal of said perpetrator. This special case is inspiring and reflects the client's

Strengthening families, preventing abuse





**The Center for
Family Justice**

commitment to justice and dedication to her personal recovery goals as a survivor.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

CHAIRPERSON:

Judy Stevens,

Attorney, State of CT

Ann E. Clark, PhD

Community Leader

Donna Craft

Community Leader

Fentyshia Daniels

Social Worker

Valerie Foster

Marketing Consultant, Editor, Writer

Jessa Francis

Sikorsky Aircraft

Catherine Gallagher

Community Leader

Thomas A. Gallo

Sikorsky Aerospace Services

Maurice Hill

Community Leader

Anthony Iannini

GE Capital

Karen Izzo

Community Leader

Patricia Johnson

Pitney Bowes, Inc.

Rachel Volkman Kushel

Attorney, Robinson & Cole

Robert Larson

Community Leader

Nancy Lessard

Community Leader

Kathryn Maiolo

Community Leader

Joseph Marrone

St. Vincent's College

Debra Menich

Community Leader

Donna Milne

First Niagara, Private Client Services

Janet Navon

Community Leader

Matthew C. Reale

Attorney, Anthony & Reale

Veronica F. Thomas

Educator

Lisa M. Todd

Community Leader

Carly J. Yearsley

Community Leader

PRESIDENT, CEO:

Debra A. Greenwood

Advocates are able to work with a survivor through his or her healing process and are available at any time. Maintaining funding is essential to continuing to provide quality direct services as well as prevention education in the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Advocacy Unit
The Center for Family Justice
Coordinator: Marisa Garwacki

