

The Center for  
Family Justice  
(Bridgeport)  
203-333-2233 hotline  
203-334-6154 office

Women's Center  
of Greater Danbury  
203-731-5204 hotline  
203-731-5200 office

Women & Families Center  
(Meriden)  
203-235-9297 office  
(Middletown)  
203-344-1474 office  
(New Haven)  
203-235-444 hotline  
203-389-5010 office

Rape Crisis Center  
of Milford  
203-878-1212 hotline  
203-874-8712 office

YWCA New Britain  
Sexual Assault Crisis Service  
(New Britain)  
860-223-1787 hotline  
860-225-4681 office  
(Hartford)  
860-547-1022 hotline  
860-225-4681 office

The Center for Sexual Assault  
Crisis Counseling and Education  
(Stamford)  
203-329-2929 hotline  
203-348-9346 office

Susan B. Anthony Project  
(Torrington)  
860-482-7133 hotline  
860-489-3798 office

Safe Haven of  
Greater Waterbury  
203-753-3613 hotline  
203-753-3613 office

Sexual Assault Crisis Center  
of Eastern Connecticut  
(Willimantic)  
860-456-2789 hotline  
860-456-3595 office  
(New London)  
860-437-7766 hotline  
860-442-0604 office

# CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Support. Advocate. Prevent.

formerly CONNSACS

## **Testimony of Deb Heinrich, Director of Policy and Public Relations Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (formerly CONNSACS) Education Committee**

### **In Opposition to Certain Provisions in SB378 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the High School Graduation Requirements Task Force**

March 7, 2016

Good Afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher, Representative Lavielle and members of the Education Committee. My name is Deb Heinrich and I am Director of Policy and Public Relations for Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (formerly CONNSACS). The Alliance is the state's leading voice to end sexual violence. We are a coalition of nine community-based sexual assault crisis services programs, which provide free and confidential sexual assault crisis counseling and victim advocacy to thousands of women, men and children across Connecticut each year.

### **We are testifying in Opposition to Certain Provisions in SB378 An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the High School Graduation Requirements Task Force**

Our schools should strive to educate the whole child. Doing so means that a student's physical, social and emotional development should have the same support as their academic development. One cannot succeed without the other. SB378 proposes to eliminate health education from the state's high school graduation requirements. Doing so will be counter to efforts to implement a comprehensive approach to sexual health education, which is not only important for social and emotional development, it is an important tool for sexual assault prevention. In 2014, this legislature passed PA-14-196 An Act Concerning a State-wide Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness Program. In October of this year, all schools K-12 in Connecticut will be required to implement that plan that the State Department of Education, Department of Children and Families, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, and a state-wide multidisciplinary panel including Connecticut Boards of Education and Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents created over the past year and a half. Schools will be teaching students in age appropriate ways about respectful interpersonal interactions, what it means to have active consent and what healthy relationships look like.

(Continued)

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[EndSexualViolenceCT.org](http://EndSexualViolenceCT.org)

**Statewide 24 Hour  
Toll Free Hotline:**  
1-888-999-5545 ENGLISH  
1-888-568-8332 ESPAÑOL

They will also touch on what it looks like when relationships are not healthy, how to identify them and how a student can get help if that happens. It will not only help students to recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships, it will help them to better understand what is expected of them in appropriate interpersonal interactions, thus using discussion and education to prevent future sexual assaults. The plan is designed to be part of a comprehensive look at sexual health education and should not be left to be taught in a vacuum without supporting health education efforts.

We ask that this committee consider amending SB378 to re-instate the half-credit health education requirement for high school graduation.

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