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Testimony in support of

HB-5365: An Act Concerning Legal Protections for Persons Entering Cars to Render Emergency Assistance to Children

Judiciary Committee

February 29, 2016

Good Morning Co-Chairs Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, Vice Chairs Senator Doyle, Representative Fox; Ranking Members Senator Kissel, Representative Rebimbas; and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for raising my bill and allowing me to submit testimony in support of *HB-5365 An Act Concerning Legal Protections for Persons Entering Cars to Render Emergency Assistance to Children*.

On average we have lost 37 children annually since 1998 in the United States because they were left unattended in a hot vehicle. These unspeakable tragedies require us to take action and encourage bystanders to help these innocent children. As a result, I have crafted this proposal narrowly to encourage someone with a reasonable belief that a child is in imminent danger within a vehicle, to take reasonable steps to rescue the child and contact the appropriate authorities. This simple bill will prevent a family from losing a precious child to an avoidable circumstance.

The body heat of a child heats up and cools off significantly faster than that of an adult, in fact 4 times as fast. On a 60 degree day, which is nothing compared to the extreme heat of recent Connecticut summers, a mere 20 minutes is all it takes for the temperature in a vehicle to climb high enough to be deadly to a youth. Hence, it is time and exposure to extreme temperatures that are critical factors impacting a child left in these dangerous environments.

In addition, extreme cold can harm a child as well. A highly publicized case here in Connecticut last winter illustrates how important it is for this bill to pass.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this important proposal.