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Testimony of Natasha M. Pierre, Esq., State Victim Advocate
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Good morning Senator Coleman, Representative Tong and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Natasha Pierre and I am the Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning:

Raised Bill No. 5597, *An Act Protecting Domestic Violence Victims Seeking Restraining Orders*

Raised Bill No. 5597 will enable applicants seeking relief from abuse against a family or household member the option of informing the court, at the time of the application, whether he/she has probable cause to believe that a family or household member poses a risk of imminent personal injury to the applicant. The court would then be required to refer the matter to the State's Attorney's office for commencement of risk warrant proceedings pursuant to existing law under C.G.S. §29-38c.

Raised Bill No. 5597 will also allow applicants seeking relief from abuse against a family or household member to inform the court whether the respondent holds an eligibility certificate for a pistol or revolver, a long gun eligibility certificate or an ammunition certificate. Currently, these applications allow applicants to inform the court whether the respondent holds a permit to carry a pistol or revolver or possess one or more firearms or ammunition.

If enacted, Raised Bill No. 5597 will expand the amount of information that may be available to the court when considering an application for relief from abuse. The more information available to the court, the better informed the court will be when deciding whether to grant the relief requested by the applicant and deciding any appropriate measures necessary for the protection of the applicant.

The Office of the Victim Advocate fully supports Raised Bill No. 5549 which will undoubtedly provide additional tools to the court as well as protections to domestic violence victims and urges the Committee's favorable report. Thank you for consideration of my testimony.