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**Testimony of the Connecticut Bar Association
Human Rights and Responsibilities Section**

In SUPPORT of

**HB5621, An Act Concerning Human Trafficking
And
HB5623, An Act Concerning Violence Against Women And Victims Of Human Trafficking
And
HB5052, An Act Strengthening Protections for Victims of Human Trafficking**

**JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
Monday, March 14, 2016**

Good Morning Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, Senator Doyle, Representative Fox, Senator Kissel and Representative Rebimbas, and members of the Judiciary Committee.

The Connecticut Bar Association's Human Rights and Responsibilities Section **supports** HB5621, An Act Concerning Human Trafficking, HB5623, An Act Concerning Violence against Women and Victims of Human Trafficking, and HB5052, An Act Strengthening Protections for Victims of Human Trafficking.

The Human Rights and Responsibilities Section has for at least three years pursued support legislation that would provide protection for victims of human trafficking.

House Bills 5621, 5623 and 5052 propose a comprehensive set of provisions to monitor, limit and prevent human trafficking.

The provisions include but are not limited to the following:

- impose new fines, increase existing fines and increase criminal penalties for persons convicted of human trafficking-related violations and/or sexual violations against victims of human trafficking; broaden the age range of victims by increase the age of human trafficking victims from 16 years of age to 18 years of age for a human trafficking victim to be convicted as a prostitute;
- require the Commissioner of Children and Families and the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection Commission develop a training program to raise awareness of incidents of human trafficking;



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- institute reforms designed to prevent human trafficking at hotels motels and similar lodgings;
- require reporting to the General Assembly of human trafficking prosecutions and investigations; and
- to amend the duties and composition of the trafficking in persons council.

It is welcomed that the Connecticut General Assembly has taken important steps to recognize and deal with the problem of human trafficking which is real and exists in Connecticut and throughout the country. Human Trafficking is recognized as a form of modern-day slavery where people profit from the control and exploitation of others. Because most of this slavery takes place out of the sight of the public, statistics are hard to confirm but it is believed that 80 percent of the human-trafficking victims internationally are women and children and of that figure it is believed that nearly one-half are children and teens under the age of 18. These are the people who are least likely to be able to escape this modern day slavery and end up on the streets or in the seedy motels of Connecticut as prostitutes where they are exploited by their pimps and their johns.

Accordingly, as these efforts are important and critical steps to eliminate human trafficking and more effectively address the rights and protections of human trafficking victims, the Human Rights Section of the CBA strongly supports House Bills 5621, 5623 and 5052, and respectfully urges the members of the Judiciary Committee to vote in favor of them.

Barbara Collins
Chair

Alix Simonetti
Legislative Liaison