

Senator Fonfara, Senator Frantz, Representative Rojas, and honorable members of the Committee. My name is Caitlin Reese, and I am the Director of the Sexual Assault Crisis Service (SACS), YWCA New Britain. SACS serves sexual assault survivors and their loved ones with free and confidential services. These services include a 24 hour crisis hotline, counseling, support groups, accompaniment and support throughout medical, police, and court processes, outreach, prevention education, and state certification courses to become a Counselor Advocate. We serve over 40 towns including the greater Hartford and New Britain districts. On average, we provide services to over 800 survivors each year.

We urge your support of SB 1011, which will increase revenue to support sexual and domestic violence services provided by community-based nonprofits in Connecticut. The Marriage License Surcharge (MLS) is a fee paid by those obtaining a marriage license in Connecticut. Since its implementation in 1992, the MLS has not been increased from the current amount of \$20.

Under this proposal, the MLS will be increased to \$35. From this increase, \$34 will go directly to support services provided by community-based nonprofits to survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Marriages in Connecticut have held steady in recent years with approximately 19,000 marriage licenses obtained per year. This means the annual revenue to help support sexual and domestic violence services could increase to about \$646,000 per year.

Economic and fiscal challenges continue to impact sexual and domestic violence services. Financial support is being reduced for service providers while survivors seeking our help experience acute and complex problems due to the impact of the economy on their personal lives. We urge your support to increase this alternate source of revenue.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Reese  
Director - SACS

for every woman

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**

for every woman

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