



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**Member Organizations**

The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services  
Ansonia, CT

The Center for Family Justice  
Bridgeport, CT

Woman's Center  
Danbury, CT

Domestic Violence Program  
United Services  
Dayville, CT

Midwest Against Domestic Abuse  
Enfield, CT

Duocher Abuse Services  
Greenwich YWCA  
Greenwich, CT

Intervest House  
Hartford, CT

Chrysalis Domestic Violence Services  
Meriden, CT

New Horizons  
Middletown, CT

Prudence Crandall Center  
New Britain, CT

The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services  
New Haven, CT

Solo Futures  
New London, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center  
Norwalk, CT

Women's Support Services  
Sharon, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center  
Stamford, CT

Thomas B. Anthony Project  
Torrington, CT

Safe Haven  
Waterbury, CT

Domestic Violence Program  
United Services  
Willimantic, CT

**Testimony in Support of**

**SB 13, AAC the Minimum Fair Wage  
HB 5591, AAC Pay Equity in the Workforce  
HB 6208, AA Increasing the Minimum Wage**

**Labor & Public Employees Committee  
February 9, 2017**

Good afternoon Senator Gomes, Senator Miner, Representative Porter and members of the committee. I am a Juris Doctor student and interning at CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV), which is the state's leading voice for victims of domestic violence. Our member agencies provide essential services to over 40,000 victims of domestic violence each year. These services include 24-hour crisis response, emergency shelter, safety planning, counseling, agency/staff training, support groups and court advocacy.

**We urge your support of SB 13, HB 5591 and HB 6208.**

CCADV is an agency that works to support victims of domestic violence in the many forms that it may take. While domestic violence is an epidemic that affects all socioeconomic classes, poor and working class victims have a harder time securing their safety apart from their abuser – largely due to a lack of financial means. Increasing the minimum wage in Connecticut and ensuring pay equity is an act that will not only help all of Connecticut's working residents, but will give added support to victims of domestic violence in their efforts to escape abusive relationships.

Financial abuse is a form of domestic violence that occurs in 98% of abusive relationships. It is a form of domestic violence that seeks to render the victim solely dependent on the abuser. There are generally three categories of financial abuse: preventing the victim from acquiring resources, preventing the victim from using resources, or exploiting the victim's resources. Many victims do not (or are not permitted to) have gainful employment. Inadequate finances leave victims lacking autonomy and confidence that they have the economic stability to be on their own. Very few victims are able to afford housing, daycare, groceries, transportation and other basic necessities on the current minimum wage.

It is also important to note that gender-based wage inequality drastically impacts women and their children in terms of financial stability, ability to build assets, and access to education and healthcare. The prospect of being homeless because the wages they earn are not enough to afford housing is oftentimes enough to keep the victim in the abusive relationship. Financial abuse is oftentimes cited as the main reason that victims stay. In the United States, domestic violence is deeply enmeshed with homelessness. According to data from the National Network to End Domestic Violence, nearly 40% of victims will experience homelessness at some point in their lives.

Increasing the minimum wage is a step that 19 states, including Connecticut, have already taken at the beginning of 2017. Steadily increasing the minimum wage over the next several years and ensuring pay equity will not only serve residents and victims of domestic violence, but it will mean that Connecticut is leading the way on a national initiative. Rather than having to react to an increased cost of living in Connecticut in the coming years, the state will be steadily ensuring that its residents

are ahead of the curve. Residents will receive economic security and feel like they are able to survive and remain in Connecticut. We urge your support of these measures.

Samantha Conway, BSW  
Intern  
CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence

*For questions, please contact Liza Andrews, Director of Public Policy & Communications, at [landrews@ctcadv.org](mailto:landrews@ctcadv.org)*