



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Member Organizations

The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services

Ansonia, CT

The Center for Family Justice

Bridgeport, CT

Women's Center

Danbury, CT

Domestic Violence Program United Services

Dayville, CT

Network Against Domestic Abuse

Enfield, CT

Domestic Abuse Services Greenwich YWCA

Greenwich, CT

Interval 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

Safe Futures

New London, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center

Norwalk, CT

Women's Support Services

Sharon, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center

Stamford, CT

Susan B. Anthony Project

Torrington, CT

Safe Haven

Waterbury, CT

Domestic Violence Program United Services

Testimony Supporting

HB 5173, AA Protecting the Privacy of Voters

Government Administration & Elections Committee

February 26, 2018

Good afternoon Senator Flexer, Senator McLachlan, Representative Fox and members of the committee. CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is the state's leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those who serve them. Our members provide essential services to nearly 40,000 victims of domestic violence each year. Services provided include 24-hour crisis response, emergency shelter, safety planning, counseling, support groups and court advocacy.

We urge your support of HB 5173.

The proposed bill seeks to increase voter privacy by curtailing the availability of the state's voter file. Privacy is an ongoing concern for many survivors of domestic violence who have left unsafe situations. The fear that their abuser will gain access to their personal information, including their current address, and find them is ever present. Many survivors have to navigate a complex and confusing system to maintain their privacy and some, unfortunately, decide not to vote at all to avoid risking their safety.

In particular, **we urge your support of subsection (b)(3)** which will allow a voter to submit to the Secretary of the State a signed statement requesting nondisclosure of their information on the voter file if necessary to protect their safety or that of their family. Their personal information, including their address, would be confidential and only disclosed on the list used by polling officials on Election Day. This would provide a critical protection for domestic violence survivors throughout the state. Advocates at the state's 18 domestic violence organizations could work with survivors to ensure they are aware of and able to access this proposed protection.

For survivors who are concerned about the disclosure of their current location, these types of voter privacy protections are critical. Many people do not realize that their voter registration record may be publicly available and that it may include identifying information. Lack of privacy is an extremely unfortunate reason for someone to not be able to vote and something that should be addressed so that all citizens can exercise their constitutional right and engage in the political process. This is particularly true for survivors who may be at risk for harm if their personal information is shared.

We applaud the Secretary of the State for taking this step to increase privacy for voters in Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

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