



## **Dannel P. Malloy**

GOVERNOR  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

March 7, 2018

Sen. Tim Larson  
Sen. Tony Guglielmo  
Rep. Joe Verrengia  
Rep. J.P. Sredzinski

Public Safety and Security Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3600  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Testimony from Governor Dannel P. Malloy in support of S.B. 17: An Act Promoting Fairness in Access to Information, Support, and Justice for Sexual Assault Victims

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on such an important issue.

In 2015, I signed Public Act 15-207 into law requiring that all sexual assault evidence kits be sent to the crime lab within ten days of collection, and be tested by the crime lab within sixty days of receipt. In 2016, I created the Sexual Assault Kit Working Group (SAKWG) to continue the work being done on important issues related to the handling of sex assault kits and victims' rights. The SAKWG has addressed issues ranging from the barriers to the submission of kits for testing to the creation of a standardized method to transfer and track the kits. The SAKWG also identified ways to ensure that victims of sexual assault have access to support by trained advocates and law enforcement professionals, and have access to information regarding their kits and their case.

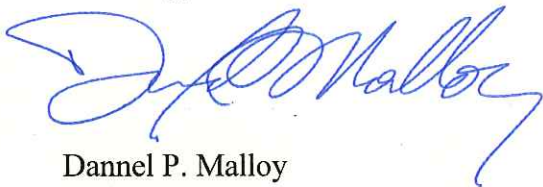
Victims of sexual assault have endured the unthinkable and they deserve to explore all of their legal options in a compassionate way. Senate Bill 17 seeks to codify best practices to ensure sexual assault victims are treated fairly throughout this process. This proposal requires health care facilities to contact a sexual assault victim advocate upon the arrival of a victim at their facility, which is imperative to ensuring victims are properly supported after a traumatic experience. In addition, this proposal seeks to facilitate victims' access to information regarding their kit and their case.

The proper tracking and handling of sexual assault evidence kits is integral to preserving victims' rights. To that end, this proposal codifies existing practice, by requiring that barcodes be affixed to every kit for tracking purposes and requires the development of training and guidelines around the use of kit-tracking software.

An Act Promoting Fairness in Access to Information, Support and Justice for Sexual Assault Victims is an essential step in ensuring victim's dignity after the trauma of an assault. Testing of sexual assault evidence kits is both a matter of justice for the victim and a matter of public safety. The evidence secured through the collection of DNA can help solve and prevent crimes. The evidence can eliminate or identify a suspect, identify someone with previous convictions and link cases and identify serial rapists. For these reasons, I urge you to support and vote favorably for the legislation before you.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to you today. I look forward to continue working together to help insure victims of sexual assault are treated fairly in the State of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dannel P. Malloy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor