State of Connecticut
SENATE
Fourteenth District

Chairman Winfield, Chairman Staffstrom, Ranking Members, Vice-Chairs, and Distinguished members of the judiciary committee, my name is James Maroney and I represent the 14th state Senate district. I am here to testify in **strong support of SB 3: AN ACT COMBATTING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**

I will focus my testimony on the importance of eliminating the statute of limitations on child sexual assault crimes, and also make one recommendation for an addition to the bill. In the past year, I learned that someone who I am very close with was abused as a child. I learned of how this has caused a struggle for years, and the pain my friend experienced when they came forward to the police to give a statement, as they were forced to relive the trauma caused by the abuse.

After digging deep within to find the strength to come forward and relive the details of something deeply troubling and painful, nothing could be done, because the statute of limitations had passed.

While the current statute of limitations is longer than it was at the time that this crime was committed, I feel that we should not have any statute of limitations on sexual assault crimes against children. The average age of someone who was abused and comes forward is in their fifties. We need to protect our children, and if we can't protect our children, we need to give them justice. While ultimately, a conviction may not have resulted from my friend's situation, confronting the accuser would have been an important step in the healing process.

In addition to this friend, my cousin McKayla Maroney was also the victim of child sexual assault. While much has been written about her case, I must confess, I haven't read too much, because it is too troubling, and I have never discussed it directly with my cousin. I still think of her as a toddler who loved "A Bug's Life." I do want to share a little of the impact that this has had on my uncle, as I had spoken with him about this, and many issues.

Sexual assault is devastating to both the child and their surrounding family. My uncle was one of the strongest people who I have ever known. At one point when he was describing the aftermath for his family, he said, we are broken now, but we will get better. That was a very
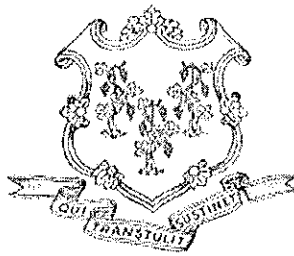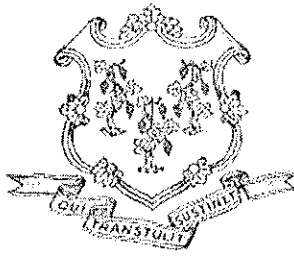
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tough thing to hear. Part of his anguish came from the fact that at times he may have felt that something just wasn't right.

The same way that the father of my other friend felt. We all want to protect our children. That is why I would like to suggest an amendment to the bill. In this bill, we are working to educate employees and employers about sexual harassment. I would suggest that we also add an education component for parents on how to recognize warning signs of sexual abuse.

I would recommend that we use the concussion protocol as an example, and require parents to watch educational materials or take a brief online course. This can be done when registering students for school, or a link can be sent when public schools are distributing their student handbook. The CDC has already produced content that can be used, and schools are already sending information to parents. I ask you to consider this measure so that we can try to prevent sexual assault against children, and if we can't prevent it, at least stop it earlier.

Thank you for your time,

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