

Good day, Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Anastasia Martineau, and I am the President of Revolution Against Rape, a student organization at the University of Connecticut that is dedicated to ending sexual assault and rape culture. We strongly support S.B. 3, An Act Combating Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment.

Every fall, Revolution Against Rape holds a March to End Victim Blaming on campus, where hundreds of students, faculty, and community members join us in a march around campus and a speak out, where people are able to share their stories of sexual assault, harassment, and violence in a safe space. I myself have had the experience of getting up to speak about my own experiences with these issues. I will never forget what it was like to say the words out loud for the first time, that I am a part of the one in five women who have experienced sexual violence in their lifetimes. Now, as President of my organization, I see people every year bravely step up and say the same.

Sexual assault is not something that is easy to talk about. Many victim-survivors have a very hard time coming to terms with what happened by themselves, or even realizing what happened in the first place, never mind being able to talk to someone else about what happened. I have seen many people come up to talk about an assault that happened to them as a child, or in their hometown that they have not been able to disclose until they were at college and away from their perpetrators. Years later, I too still deal with the trauma of what happened to me, even though I have had access to the resources to heal. The process of healing and the courage it takes to speak out is more than a five-year process. We must be able to reflect this process in Connecticut policy if we truly want to stand with victim-survivors, and follow the 25 states that have eliminated the statute of limitations.

Victim-survivors not only need to be given time to come forward, but also the resources to help them feel more comfortable doing so. With 8 out of 10 rapes being committed by someone the victim-survivor knows, we need to be able to provide more protection for those who speak out against their co-workers and classmates. At Revolution Against Rape, we strongly believe in protecting the victim-survivor above all else, and this means that they should *never* be forced to suffer repercussions for reporting. The trainings and protections required under this bill are crucial to not only educating and protecting Connecticut residents, but to changing the climate of rape culture that is so prevalent in our society.

I hope that Committee will stand with victim-survivors like myself across Connecticut and give them the time and protections they need to come forward by passing SB 3 An Act Combating Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment.

Thank you.

Anastasia Martineau,
President of Revolution Against Rape

