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Submitted to the Judiciary Committee
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Good morning Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. For the record, my name is Natasha Pierre and I am the Victim Advocate for the State of Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **OPPOSITION** to:

Senate Bill No. 1194, An Act Relieving Certain Registrants of the Requirements of the Sex Offense Registry and Clarifying Registration Requirements for Persons Transferred into this State and Who Reside in Congregate Care Settings

Connecticut first established the sex offender registry in 1998, like many other states, largely in response to the case of 7-year-old Megan Kanka of New Jersey, who was killed in 1994 by a sex offender living near her home. The registry is a tool that allows government authorities to keep track of convicted sex offenders and more importantly provides information to citizens on where sex offenders are living in their communities. The purpose and importance of the sex offender registry has not changed since it was established.

Senate Bill No. 1194 would undermine the information and protection available in the registry relating to certain offenders. The proposal does not provide for an evaluation or risk assessment of the offender before removal from the registry, and therefore is inconsistent with the purpose of the registry to promote victim and public safety.

There have been efforts in the last several years to reform the sex offender registry, specifically to a risk level registry versus a conviction-based registry. The Office of the Victim Advocate has remained consistent that any reforms must include a reliable risk assessment evaluation by a board of professionals in the field. Senate Bill No. 1194 fails to consider the safety of victims and the public.

I strongly urge the Committee to reject Senate Bill No. 1194. Thank you for consideration of my testimony.