

November 27, 2007

Good afternoon Chairmen McDonald and Lawlor, Ranking Members Kissel and O'Neill and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee. I, along with my wife Bridget, would like to take this opportunity to thank you for holding today's public hearing on strengthening Connecticut's criminal justice laws.

We are submitting testimony today in support of **"Proposal Number 5"** offered by the House Republican Caucus.

The three murders that occurred last July in the Petit's Cheshire home exposed many flaws in our criminal justice system and made many people feel vulnerable in their own homes. As Connecticut citizens, we don't ask a lot of our government, but we all should be able to feel safe and secure in our homes.

Local and state police and other law enforcement officials do a great job protecting Connecticut families. But, all of their hard work is meaningless if we have laws that allow dangerous criminals back on the streets. We are concerned that the focus of some of the work of the legislature is turning to other issues, such as prison overcrowding and the rights of prisoners. What about law-abiding citizens and what about families of the victims? Don't they have rights? We need laws that are going to protect citizens, not criminals.

We believe that the House Republican proposal meets the needs of citizens first. It accomplishes three things:

- Keeps violent criminals in jail for appropriate lengths of time with a true "Three Strikes and You're Out Law". The most hardened criminals will never get out of jail.
- Includes a "Castle Doctrine" provision that allows people to protect themselves in their own homes.
- Monitors criminals after they are released from prison.

In the days following the violent murders in Cheshire, the public learned that those responsible for their deaths had rather lengthy criminal records, but ironically, due to their prior convictions, were considered minimum security offenders and had a fairly minimal history of violent crime. Tragically, because of this, the state did not deem them a risk and they were released from prison granted supervised parole.

We cannot go back and rewrite the past. A mother and her two daughters were murdered by two men deemed nonviolent by Connecticut judicial standards. You cannot allow that

to happen again. You and only you, as elected officials in this state, must take the steps necessary to strengthen our laws to better protect our citizens.

My wife and I strongly urge you to adopt the House Republican proposal to ensure that those likely to commit a violent crime in the future stay in prison never to offend again.

Sincerely,

Allen and Bridget Mossien
Glastonbury, CT