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Testimony of Natasha M. Pierre, Esq., State Victim Advocate  
Submitted to the Judiciary Committee  
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Good afternoon Senator Coleman, Representative Tong 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 concerning:

Senate Bill No. 1087, *An Act Concerning Sexual Offender Registration Laws, Residency Restrictions for Registered Sexual Offenders and Reentry Housing*

The Office of the Victim Advocate (OVA) certainly supports any and all efforts to hold persons convicted of sexual offenses accountable through reasonable terms of confinement, enhanced periods of supervision, compliance with strict conditions of release into the community, evidence-based program participation and zero tolerance for those who violate any condition with clear consequences for such violations. The provisions of Senate Bill No. 1087 seeks to accomplish much of this complicated task.

The Sex Offender Registry (SOR), available through the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection website, contains information about all registered sex offenders in Connecticut, except those that have been exempted from the registration requirements, sex offenders convicted of crimes prior to the establishment of the registry or those in violation of the requirement to register. The information includes the name, address, a photo and the details of the conviction that required the person to register. Some of the entries contain a summary of the crime in addition to the referenced statute violation.

Senate Bill No. 1087 would require that the registrant provide more detailed information to the SOR, some of which will not be available to the public, which will likely improve law enforcements' ability to track and verify registration information. However, it is not clear from the proposal what information will be available to the public. For example, the proposal establishes a tier system classification to the criminal offenses required for registration. Tier one offenses include voyeurism with intent to sexually arouse, possession of child pornography first degree and aggravated public indecency with a victim under 18 (newly created); Tier two offenses include kidnapping first degree

with a victim under 18, enticing a minor and contact with intimate parts, victim 13 or older but under 16 (redefined); Tier three offenses include sexual assault first degree, second, and third, kidnapping first degree with intent to sexually assault a person and employing a minor in an obscene performance. I have attached a complete breakdown of the offenses for your convenience. The proposal does not consider any risk assessments in determining the "tier" offense classification, rather it is solely based upon the offense a person is **convicted** of. This may be problematic if the registry merely contains the "tier" offense and not a description of the actual incident or the statutory reference.

More than 95% of criminal matters in Connecticut are resolved through the plea bargain process. Knowing that and understanding that obliges us to carefully examine the manner in which we inform the public about those individuals required to register. While many cases are resolved through plea bargains now, the information on the registry identifies the statutory citation and in some cases, a description of the offense. At the very least, a person interested in knowing more about a referenced statute would have the ability to obtain such information. A "tier" offense classification offers no information on the crime committed and actually implies, even if unintentional, a risk association with the level of the tier. Said another way, a person may interpret a "tier one" offense as low risk, a "tier two" offense as moderate risk and a "two three" offense as high risk. The information on the registry must be meaningful if it is going to accomplish its goal of providing information to the public on persons required to register as sexual offenders.

While the provisions of Senate Bill No. 1087, if passed in its entirety, would have a direct impact on the registration, verification, and violation enforcement of registered sexual offenders, it is not realistic to believe this can be accomplished without full commitment, including the challenging resources required to implement the provisions of the proposal. Perhaps the Committee should consider the re-establishment of the Sex Offender Policy Advisory Commission (SOPAC) to examine the "tier" offense classification system and make appropriate recommendations to improve Connecticut's SOR. The SOPAC identified the crimes that would require a person to register once the registry was established. The SOPAC, if re-established, could also examine other important issues, such as risk assessment, victim services, evidence-based programming, housing and employment.

Thank you for consideration of my testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Natasha M. Pierre, Esq.  
State Victim Advocate

Raised Senate Bill No. 1087, An Act Concerning Sexual Offender Registration Laws, Residency Restrictions for Registered Sexual Offenders and Reentry Housing

**Tier One Offenses:**

1. Sexual assault 4<sup>th</sup>- victim is 18 or over
2. Aggravated public indecency- victim is under 18
3. Voyeurism with intent to sexually arouse
4. Possession of child porn 1<sup>st</sup>
5. Possession of child porn 2<sup>nd</sup>
6. Possession of child porn 3<sup>rd</sup>
7. Criminally liable for any of the above
8. Conspiracy for any of the above
9. Criminal attempt for any of the above
10. Any predecessor statute with same elements for any of the above

**Tier Two Offenses:**

1. Risk of Injury (subdivision (2) prior to 10/1/2000)
2. Risk of injury (subsection (a)(2) prior to 10/1/2015)
3. Contact with intimate parts- victim 13 or older but under 16
4. Sexual assault 4<sup>th</sup> – victim 13 or older but under 18
5. Enticing a minor
6. Kidnap 1<sup>st</sup> – victim under 18
7. Kidnap 1<sup>st</sup> with a firearm – victim under 18
8. Kidnap 2<sup>nd</sup> – victim under 18
9. Kidnap 2<sup>nd</sup> with a firearm – victim under 18
10. Unlawful restraint 1<sup>st</sup> – victim under 18
11. Unlawful restraint 2<sup>nd</sup> – victim under 18
12. Criminally liable for any of the above
13. Conspiracy for any of the above
14. Criminal attempt for any of the above
15. Any predecessor statute with same elements for any of the above

**Tier Three Offenses:**

1. Sexual assault 1<sup>st</sup>
2. Aggravated sexual assault 1<sup>st</sup>
3. Sexual assault – spousal
4. Sexual assault 2<sup>nd</sup>
5. Sexual assault 3<sup>rd</sup>
6. Sexual assault 3<sup>rd</sup> with a firearm
7. Sexual assault 4<sup>th</sup> – victim under 13
8. Contact with intimate parts – victim under 13
9. Promoting prostitution 1<sup>st</sup> – victim under 18
10. Promoting prostitution 2<sup>nd</sup> (the bill references a subsection that does not exist)
11. Employing a minor in an obscene performance

12. Promoting a minor in an obscene performance
13. Importing child porn
14. Kidnap 1<sup>st</sup> – with intent to sexually assault
15. Kidnap 1<sup>st</sup> with a firearm – with intent to sexually assault
16. Criminally liable for any of the above
17. Conspiracy for any of the above
18. Criminal attempt for any of the above
19. Any predecessor statute with same elements for any of the above