

2017 Mid Legislative Session Update

BILLS STILL IN COMMITTEE

S.B. [1011](#) AN ACT INCREASING THE MARRIAGE LICENSE FEE AND SURCHARGE

This bill would increase the marriage license fee and the marriage license surcharge for services for victims of sexual and domestic violence. The surcharge would increase \$15 from \$20 to \$35 which would be split between funding domestic and sexual assault services. Over the last few years, an increase in demand for intervention and prevention services, coupled with several years of budget cuts have created a need for increased revenue to support critical services. *This bill was given a public hearing and is awaiting a vote in the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee.*

BILLS VOTED OUT OF COMMITTEE

S.B. [586](#) AN ACT EXPANDING MANDATED HEALTH BENEFITS FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND ADOLESCENTS.

S.B. 586 would expand mandated health benefits for women, children and adolescents, expand mandated contraception benefits; and require the Commissioner of Social Services to amend the Medicaid state plan to provide expanded contraception benefits. The Alliance supports this bill because we understand that, in the aftermath of trauma, victims deserve comprehensive and affordable access to healthcare and preventative services. *This bill was voted out of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

S.B. [726](#) AN ACT CONCERNING CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND RESTITUTION FROM PERSONS COMMITTING CRIMINAL ACTS

This bill amends the maximum compensation amount available to sexual assault victims through the Victim Compensation Fund from \$15,000 to \$25,000. Due to a decrease in the deposits into the Crime Injuries Compensation Fund, The Alliance associated itself with the Judicial Branch's amendment language that would allow the award of an additional \$5,000 to a sexual assault victim who was a minor at the time of their assault or has outstanding medical or mental health counseling needs after reaching the \$15,000 maximum amount. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

S.B. [930](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECEIPT OF ANNUAL REPORTS ON ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

This bill requires annual reports on anti-human trafficking efforts from each state's attorney and municipal chief of police be sent to the Trafficking in Persons Council. As a longstanding member of the Trafficking in Persons Council, The Alliance believes sharing of these records will help to facilitate and the continued collaborative approach of the Council and its many stakeholders to understand address trafficking in Connecticut. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

S.B. [979](#) AN ACT CONCERNING NOTIFICATION TO SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION OF RESTRAINING ORDERS, CIVIL PROTECTION ORDERS AND STANDING CRIMINAL PROTECTIVE ORDERS AFFECTING STUDENTS

This bill allows for a victim who is the subject of a Civil Protection Order or other type of protection to choose to provide the address and name of their school or institution of higher education to the clerk of the court in order to have the information about the protective order shared with their school. The Alliance supports victim's rights to choose to share this information with their school to ensure that student victims have adequate safety planning and protection, and supports the substitute language that ensures that the victim can choose whether or not to share this information. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary and is headed to the Senate floor.*

S.B. [1040](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE REGISTRATION OF JUVENILES AS SEXUAL OFFENDERS AND NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT A REGISTRANT MAY BE A STUDENT IN THE DISTRICT

This bill requires that local and regional boards of education be notified of any juvenile in their district who is convicted of a felony sex offense. The Alliance recommended no current action on this bill due to the ongoing work of Connecticut Sentencing Commission, Special Committee on Sex Offenders, who will offer their comprehensive recommendation on this topic in December of this year. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

S.B. [1041](#) AN ACT CONCERNING GPS MONITORING OF CONVICTED PERSONS AWAITING SENTENCING FOR AGGRAVATED SEXUAL ASSAULT

This bill requires any person awaiting sentencing for aggravated sexual assault to be monitored by a global positioning system device. The Alliance recognizes that an assurance that an offender will be subjected to GPS monitoring adds an important element of personal and community safety for victims and their families. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

S.B. [1042](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS FOR THE PROSECUTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

This bill increases the criminal statute of limitations for sexual assault crimes in Connecticut from 5 years to 10 years. The Alliance opposed this bill, recognizing that, while it is a clear improvement, and a step in the right direction, until Connecticut eliminates the criminal statute of limitations completely, giving both victims and prosecutors the time they need to bring justice to victims, victims will be left behind. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

H.B. [7262](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO VICTIM NOTIFICATION

This bill would require, for any sentence longer than two years, that a victim be able to request in writing information about the plea deal being offered and their offender's ability to earn risk reductions credits, or be eligible for release on parole. Instead of the victim request, The Alliance supports that the state's attorney or deputy state's attorney should be required to provide this information in writing to victims on all occasions. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

H.B. [7299](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STRENGTHENING LAWS CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

This bill proposes changing the language in Connecticut's anti-stalking statute to use a reasonable person standard when evaluating the level of fear incorporating a lower level of fear into Connecticut's anti-stalking statutes (CGS § 53a-181c through 53a-181e) and redefining the reasonable person to be that of someone in the victim's circumstances. Acknowledging that stalking behaviors are often precursors to sexual violence, The Alliance supports these changes to better serve victims by recognizing the contexts of the actors or behaviors of their stalker. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

H.B. [7309](#) AN ACT CONCERNING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

This bill makes a variety of changes to the state's current trafficking statute including charging the Trafficking in Persons Council to develop a list of traits that may indicate that someone is a victim of trafficking, new curriculum for training healthcare, legal and education professionals to identify victims of trafficking, raising trafficking in persons from a Class B to a Class A felony and creating an entirely separate felony for commercial sex trafficking of a minor. The Alliance supports these changes that represent the state's commitment to developing more progressive policies towards trafficking in our state, specifically, targeting those who pay for sex as oppose to their victims. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

S.B. [980](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A VICTIM'S RIGHT TO BE REASONABLY PROTECTED FROM THE ACCUSED

This bill would provide increased employment protections for employees when any order of protection has been ordered on behalf of the employee. The Alliance supports the additional language that ensures that victims can work without fear of negative consequences because they are a subject of a Civil Protective Order. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the Senate floor.*

H.B. [5743](#) AN ACT CONCERNING HATE CRIMES

In an effort to reduce hate crimes, this bill would upgrade hate crimes from a misdemeanor to a Class D felony, authorize the dissemination of information about a toll-free hotline for reporting hate crimes, establish a minimum fine amount for hate crimes, and use those funds to establish a statewide hate crimes advisory council that would report yearly on efforts to reduce hate crimes. The Alliance supports all these changes in an effort to ensure timely access to information and resources of victims as well as increase the state's ability to track the number of crimes committed regardless of whether a victim reports to the police. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

H.B. [7198](#) AN ACT CONCERNING COURT OPERATIONS AND VICTIM SERVICES

This bill makes various revisions to statutes affecting court operations, court procedures and the Office of Victim Services. The Alliance suggested added language to include "messages" as a form of harassment in the protective orders section and supports the efforts to securing restitution for victims and important changes to the Office of Victim Services Compensation program found in this bill.

However, The Alliance opposes requiring victims to show good cause to as why they need information about their perpetrator as it places undue burden on a foundation of their safety plan that includes knowing the location, activity and progress of their perpetrator. *This bill was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

S.B. [1](#) / H.B. [6212](#) AN ACT CONCERNING EARNED FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

This bill would establish a paid family and medical leave program in Connecticut. As a member of the Connecticut Campaign for Paid Family Leave, The Alliance strongly supports this initiative that would allow victims and family members to take the time they need to heal without worrying about their job at the same time. *This bill was voted out of the Labor and Public Employees Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

H.B. [6695](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF YOUTH FROM CONVERSION THERAPY

This bill seeks to end conversion therapy in the state of Connecticut. As a member of CT Equality, The Alliance is proud to support a bill to remove this practice that has been clinically determined to be ineffective and harmful by the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association. *This bill was voted out of the Public Health Committee and is headed to the House floor.*

BILLS THAT WE CONTINUE TO MONITOR

H.B. [7112](#) AN ACT CONCERNING CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS

H.B. [5442](#) AN ACT CONCERNING LEGAL AGE TO MARRY IN THIS STATE

BILLS THAT DIED IN COMMITTEE

S.B. [1043](#) AN ACT CONCERNING PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS MADE BY VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING TO A HUMAN TRAFFICKING COUNSELOR

This bill would have extended the confidentiality protections afforded under section 52-146k of the general statutes to human trafficking counselors and to make conforming changes to the general statutes concerning the roles and responsibilities of human trafficking counselors. The Alliance opposed this bill on the grounds that it did not specify which agency would provide oversight and certification requirements as well as its potential to create different standards of service in the work that our advocate are already providing. *This bill was not voted on by the Judiciary Committee before its deadline.*

S.B. [1024](#) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO EVALUATE CRIMINAL STATUTES OF LIMITATIONS

This bill would establish a task force to evaluate time limitations for prosecuting a crime. The Alliance qualified its response to this bill as it would rather see S.B. 1042, An Act Concerning Statute of Limitation for the Prosecution of Sexual Assault, advance to eliminate the statute of limitation of criminal sexual assault cases completely. But, in the event that S.B. 1042 does not pass, The Alliance supports this bill to create a task force and asks that an additional member who represents victims of sexual violence be added to ensure a fair and equal discussion. *This bill was not voted on before the Judiciary Committee's deadline.*

H.B. [7045](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND YOUNG ADULT JUSTICE

This bill, aimed at reforming the criminal justice system, would permit certain crimes permitted by 18, 19 or 20 year olds to be heard in juvenile court. Only certain classes of A felonies committed by this age group would be tried in adult court. The Alliance opposed the major provisions of the "Raise the Age" portions of this bill, as they would permit sex offenses committed by 18, 19, and 20 year olds to be heard in juvenile court, cutting off a victim's access to transparency and depriving the offender of an opportunity to be placed in our state's collaborative post-conviction model of supervision. *This bill was not voted on before the Judiciary Committee's deadline.*