

**Testimony by Sandy Lomonico, MSW, MPH**  
**Testimony Supporting SB 572:**  
**An Act Concerning Community Crisis Response Teams and Reentry Centers.**  
**Legislative Office Building, Connecticut General Assembly**  
**February 11, 2021**

Representative Maria Horn, Senator Dennis Bradley, Senator Catherine Osten, Representative Alphonse Paolillo, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Sandy Lomonico and I am the Director of Programs at Sex Workers and Allies Network (SWAN) in New Haven. I have experience providing crisis prevention services for over 15 years. I am a formerly incarcerated mother of two and have worked in reentry, halfway houses, and other social service programs with a direct interest in evidence based practices for successful outcomes.

I support Senate Bill 572 and I ask that you support it because it will tackle issues that disproportionately affect communities of color. The Community Crisis Response Team will limit unneeded contact with law enforcement by dispatching appropriately qualified professionals to respond to 9-1-1 and non-emergency calls related to welfare checks, homelessness, substance use disorder and mental health crises.

The Community Crisis Response Team program will create a support system to deal with individuals who **should not be incarcerated but provided with the opportunity to get connected to treatment, services and programs during their moments of crisis. This proven approach to law enforcement will reduce the incarceration rate, cost of incarceration to taxpayers who foot the bill, and divert people from unnecessary visits to the emergency room.**

Police have been tasked with responding to many social issues that they are inappropriately equipped for. As the nation and state call for social justice and reimagining policing, SB 572 seeks to enhance first responses and reduce repeat emergency calls, while getting constituents the help that police officers don't have the training, resources, or time to provide.

I also support SB 572 because it is the first step to ensuring that men and women returning home from incarceration have better chances to reintegrate into society. People returning home from incarceration are disproportionately affected by issues related to housing, employment, substance use disorder, mental illness, and chronic medical illness.

From a fiscal perspective, SB 572 is a long-term investment to generate savings due to diversion from incarceration and the emergency room. From a human perspective, SB 572 provides the opportunity to fix systemic issues that disproportionately affect communities of color.

I ask that you support Senate Bill 572 because it is proven through research and statistics to better enhance the lives of Connecticut residents.

Thank you.



Sandy LoMonico, MSW, MPH