




# VERMONT CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

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**To:** House Judiciary Committee

**From:** Jennifer Poehlmann, Esq.   
Executive Director, Vermont Children's Alliance

**RE:** S.9 – Section 15

**Date:** April 16, 2015

Child First  
Advocacy Center of  
Rutland County

The Chittenden  
Advocacy Center  
at CUSI

The Child Advocacy  
Center at The  
Family Place/  
Windsor County  
Unit for Special  
Investigations

Windham County  
Safe Place  
CAC/SUSI

Northwest Unit for  
Special Investigations/  
Child Advocacy Center

Bennington County  
Child Advocacy Center and  
Special Investigations Unit

OUR House of  
Central Vermont

The Child Advocacy Center  
at the Springfield Area  
Parent Child Center

Caledonia Special  
Investigations Unit, Inc.

The Orleans County  
Child Advocacy Center

The Orange County  
Special Investigations Unit

Addison County Unit  
Special Investigations, Inc.

Upon review of S.9, Section 15 we have the following recommendations:

- 1) Adding the crimes of Sexual Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult as defined under 13 V.S.A. §1379 to the list of crimes SIUs are mandated to investigate under Section 15 of S.9 as proposed.

SIUs currently handle these cases and given that they are crimes currently located elsewhere in Title 13 of Vermont's statutes it is appropriate to include them.

- 2) We also understand that there have been advocates for returning other crimes against vulnerable adults and crimes of domestic violence as cases the Units are responsible for.

We recommend the following language should the Committee make this policy choice:

Please amend 24 V.S.A. §1940 as currently proposed under Section 15 by striking 24 V.S.A. 1940a(2)(C) to substitute the following: "The provisions of this section shall not limit or restrict special investigative units from serving as a resource to assist with the investigation of cases of domestic violence or crimes against vulnerable adults not otherwise enumerated herein."

We appreciate the opportunity to provide further comment and for the time and consideration from your Committee.