



April 29th, 2017

Representative Ann Pugh, Chair  
House Human Services Committee

Dear Representative Pugh,

I am pleased to submit this letter of support regarding *S. 95, An Act Relating to Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners*. This bill will strengthen services and ensure a robust and coordinated system of response for sexual assault victims statewide.

Since 2008, the Vermont Network (Vermont Network) Against Domestic and Sexual Violence has housed and managed Vermont's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program. The SANE program trains, supports and certifies a cadre of highly trained nurses across the state who provide forensic medical care to victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and abuse, and collect evidence in accordance with a standardized evidence kit. There are currently 53 certified SANEs throughout the state of Vermont. Of those nurses, 14 have additional training qualifying them to serve child victims of sexual assault. The vast majority of our SANE nurses are hospital-based emergency room providers. As part of the program oversight, the Vermont Network provides and tracks evidence kits and staffs an interdisciplinary SANE Board. The SANE program is currently staffed by the undersigned - a part-time Program Coordinator and two emergency department nurses who job share a Clinical Coordinator position.

S. 95 will make important improvements to the SANE Program by promoting geographical equity of SANE services, strengthening the SANE Board and examining Vermont's current system of evidence collection and tracking. **The staff of the Vermont SANE Program strongly support the recommended changes outlined by Auburn Watersong of the Vermont Network in her memo to you dated April 21, 2017.**

The Vermont SANE Program looks forward to working with the SANE Board and interdisciplinary partners to strengthen Vermont's response to sexual assault victims. We urge the passage of S. 95, which will support these efforts.

Sincerely,

Sarah Robinson M.S.W., Program Coordinator

Raenetta Liberty R.N., Clinical Coordinator

Joan Carson R.N., Clinical Coordinator