

For Immediate Release: July 28, 2010

Contact: Paul Mounds 860-278-8888

LARSON SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO BOLSTER FEDERAL STALKING LAWS

Joins Congresswoman Sanchez and ESPN's Erin Andrews in Advocating for Bill's Passage

Washington, DC- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) joined with lead sponsor Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), Erin Andrews of ESPN and victims of stalking all across the nation, to support legislation that will strengthen federal stalking laws and give law enforcement enhanced resources to combat stalking. Last night, The Simplifying the Ambiguous Law, Keeping Everyone Reliably Safe (STALKERS) Act of 2010 passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming bi-partisan support.

“Currently, federal stalking laws are outdated and in our digital age, do not address the new forms of stalking,” said Congressman Larson. ***“This legislation is long overdue; it greatly bolsters our existing laws to address all forms of harassment and provides the necessary protections to victims of these heinous acts.”***

Congressman Larson also applauded the leadership of his colleague Congresswoman Sanchez and Erin Andrews, a victim of video stalking, for shepherding the passage of this legislation.

“I thank my friend, Congresswoman Sanchez for championing this cause and I join strong advocates, like Ms. Andrews, in their fight to ensure that victims are safe and that those individuals who stalk the vulnerable are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law,” added Congressman Larson.

The STALKERS Act increases the scope of existing laws to cover acts of electronic surveillance, such as spyware, bugging, video surveillance and new technologies as they are developed. In addition, the legislation also:

- Provides law enforcement the power to prosecute any act of stalking that is “reasonably expected” to cause another person serious distress,
- Empowers the authorities the right to stop stalkers even if a victim is not fully aware of the danger he or she may be facing,
- Increases the punishment for stalking offenses in certain special cases, i.e. stalking in violation of a protective order,
- Requires the Attorney General to annually evaluate federal, state, and local efforts to enforce stalking laws, and to develop best practices in the enforcement of these laws.

###