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AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

**Commission on
Domestic & Sexual Violence**
1050 Connecticut Avenue, NW
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March 10, 2014

Hon. Joan Zeldon, Chair

Drafting Committee to Revise the Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act
District of Columbia Superior Court
515 Fifth St., N.W, Room 219
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Judge Zeldon,

Thank you again for welcoming the ABA Commission on Domestic & Sexual Violence to participate in the work of this committee. We were so pleased to see the revised draft, circulated via email on February 21, and the important revisions it includes, and we look forward to the committee's discussion at the March 21-22 meeting. This drafting process has resulted in significant improvements to the URLTA for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

We remain concerned, however, that the good work of the committee to offer valuable and needed protections for these victims will be significantly undermined by the disproportionately chilling penalties that remain in the draft: specifically, the threats of treble damages and potential perjury charges against victims who allegedly make false statements in their attestation of fear of abuse (Sec. 510); and the threat of eviction if a non-resident abuser causes a disturbance on the premises (Sec. 515).

After much discussion, the ABA Commission members have agreed that without revision of these critical provisions, we will be unable to support the RURLTA's adoption in the ABA House of Delegates.

Again, we deeply appreciate the commitment and attention of the committee and the drafters towards the goals of protecting survivors and respecting the reasonable needs of landlords. We remain optimistic that the spirit of open discussion and exchange of ideas that has characterized the committee's process will ensure a safe and responsible final act for all tenants and landlords.

Sincerely,



Angela Vigil, Chair

Vivian Huelgo, Chief Counsel

cc: Hon. Peter Buchsbaum, ABA Advisor
John Sebert, Staff Liaison, Uniform Law Commission