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Sent: Monday, May 09, 2022 6:09 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: Rep. Neal Foster; Rep. Kelly Merrick; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Adam Wool; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Sara Rasmussen; Rep. Ben Carpenter; Rep. DeLena Johnson
Subject: Please PASS Representative Tarr's version of HB5

Greetings Mr Co-Chair, Madam Co-Chair and members of the House Finance committee members, my name is Katie Botz and I am speaking on behalf of myself from district 34. On February 18, 2019, I went before the Senate Judiciary committee and shared what I'm about to share with you, today.

Originally I was raised in Kodiak, Alaska where at the age of 12 I was victim of sexual abuse. Statistics shows that victims know their offenders, and mine was a friend of a brother. At the time my house was a place where all of my siblings and my friends would come over as a safe place to hang out. We had a pool table, darts, every single gaming console from original Nintendo to the first PlayStation.

It was multiple attempts. The person was Alaskan Native. There was a 6 years difference. I was 12 he was 18. I tried to hide in every room, tried to sneak in every hiding place, tried to go in every closet, for I didn't want him inside me!

As far as difficulties, he would pull my hair, grab me fiercely (but left no bruises) by my limbs, including my throat. Recreated my, I attempted to kick my offender, but would make sure to restrain my legs. I also attempted to retaliate against him by hitting, but he grabbed and restrain my tiny hands so I couldn't have movements. My offender made sure that I was silenced during each penetration by placing a hand over my mouth and the other hand to keep my hands where he wanted. I wanted to scream. I wanted to yell. Instead, I was silently crying every single penetration, being forced in a frozen position that only satisfied my offender. I had zero outlet to receive help from my family members who were sleeping. Although I had zero outlet to receive help from my family, I was able to manage to lick his hands with my tongue just to get some breaths. I must say, without consent was a bit challenging to prove 22 years ago.

My mother of all things, caught my offender in the act. Not only did it break her heart, but it devastated mine. I never wanted my mother to see such devastation in the family. She was the one who kicked him out. She was the one who called the police and set the procedure in place. I was 12, what did I know what to do in a small town?

After going to court and having the rape kit completed, to this day I wished my offender had more than 6 years in prison. I'm truly thankful for Senate Judiciary committee to take my story to heart and helped changed that in HB49 crime law. Even though I wasn't strangled, and no bruises were on my body, I still remember the abuse as if it happened yesterday. For 5 years every night I cried myself to sleep, which was caused by nightmares. Each nightmare was related to the abuse by being attacked physically against my will, each and every night. From the moment my family and I placed my offender to jail to age 24, I never placed an ounce of trust in any man that came in my path. Why should I? I was robbed of my dignity, character, and honor by an Alaskan bred, Alaskan Grown man!! Do you blame me? In fact, I never spoken of my nightmares and rarely of my abuse to anyone until the 31st Senate Judiciary committee because of the stigma of sexual assault and our terrible consent law!!!!

It took me appropriate 12 years to get over my abuse. I still recall having a notebook of goodbye letters to every family members and friends, for I was planning on jumping off of the bridge in Kodiak. Thankfully, I never acted on the idea, but each time I went to my father's boat, I recall mapping out a way to get up and over just to take my life. I lost count of how many times, in the course of my life, that I had the idea of committing suicide. Suicide ideation still comes and go in my 30's. Consequently, on August 20, 2018, I was diagnosed with Major Depression Disorder which is the underlying result of being victimized sexually at such a young age. In 2022, I still struggle with my depression. I honestly believe I wouldn't have struggled with depression or suicide ideation if it wasn't for my abuse many years ago.

I am in FULL support of HB5, and truly appreciate Representative Tarr for following through with addressing sexual abuse after HB49. Alaskan victims are relying on this bill to address the HUGE concern of what the word consent means relating to sexual assault, and the name blame needs to stop now!

Alaska is still leading the nation by being the number one in sexual assault. I believe the following will help Alaska cases and Alaskan victims. Alaska's laws relating to sexual assault are decades old and must reflect that it is freely given and reversible. Our current consent law prevents prosecutors from pursuing charges unless there is a clear evidence of defensive struggle which isn't the case as I shared with you earlier. Lastly, Alaska's rape kit has been back logged for many decades and isn't victim's friendly. HB 5 would expedite rape kits in a timely fashion to help the victim seek true justice.

If protecting the public the Government's priority then there should t be a fiscal cost being tied up to our safety!! As a survivor, we need to place our number one crime (sexual assault) as our top priority, both being victim oriented as well as zero care to how much it would cost to fix the issue of sexual abuse, as well as, redefining the terminology "consent of sexual abuse!!" I understand there are members who may see problems with HB 5, but I am completely willing to take time off of work to sit down with EACH members to find a common ground to how we can better serve our victims. I respectfully request that you bring HB 5 back to committee and pass on to help Alaskan victims. Our victims have suffered enough just by the abuse, and don't need to be SHAMED more than they already see in themselves.

By stalling HB5 for as long as you've been doing, you are setting a precedent that victims of sexual abuse don't matter to you, nor worthy of your help. It's also crystal clear that constituents voice don't matter fo you. I'd like to believe that you do care, and you can prove to me and other survivors by bringing this bill back in committee. Please know that I can always be reached for questions and always willing to help make Alaska safe again.

Please pass Representative Tarr's version to HB5 out of committee for it has been a long emotional session of being silenced by previous committee!

Thank you for reading this email. Please pass HB5!!

Katie Botz
District 34

Sent from my iPhone