

Date: _____

The Honorable Thom Tillis
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: S.5029 - Bipartisan Help Find the Missing Act "Billy's Law" Introduced by U.S. Senators Thom Tillis (R-NC), Chris Murphy (D-CT), John Cornyn (R-TX), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and John Hoeven (R-ND)

Dear Senator Tillis:

Thank you for introducing your bipartisan legislation that will close loopholes in America's missing persons systems by streamlining the missing persons reporting process and ensuring that law enforcement and medical examiners have the funding to update the missing persons databases. I appreciate this because everyday people go missing and families are left navigating a broken missing persons system. I support your bipartisan legislation; however, I would suggest additional provisions to include procedures for law enforcement and courts to follow when a victim of domestic violence goes missing.

Proposed Legislative Changes –

- 1) When a missing person is also a victim of domestic violence, that case should be immediately elevated out of the county level to the State's Department of Justice and FBI.
- 2) When you have a victim of domestic violence go missing, homicide should be considered first instead of never.
- 3) When a missing person that was a victim of domestic violence is later found deceased, the estranged spouse should not automatically be deemed the Personal Representative of the deceased missing person simply because they are the spouse.
- 4) In states that have separation requirements before filing for divorce, there needs to be an escape clause for victims that are separated due to domestic violence.

Rebekah Grace Rose Barsotti, had recently left an abusive marriage in March 2021 and Charges of Domestic Violence were filed against her estranged husband after he threatened to blow her hands off. An Order of No Contact was in place when Rebekah went missing on July 20, 2021 from Mineral County, MT. Law Enforcement refused to consider the estranged husband as a suspect and informed the family "he is not a

person of interest and never will be". A body was later found May 17, 2022, then identified as Rebekah on June 2, 2022. Shockingly, the estranged husband was automatically deemed the Personal Representative of Rebekah, simply because he was the spouse. Rebekah's remains ended up in the hands of the dangerous abusive spouse she fled from. SHE IS NOW BURIED IN HIS BACK YARD!

Of course, Rebekah's parents fought every step of the way on Rebekah's behalf to no avail. Rebekah could be any parent's daughter in any state. Understandably, I am providing a cliff note version of Rebekah's story. More can be found at <https://findrebekahbarsotti.com/>

Please consider introducing an additional provision, "Rebekah's Law", outlining procedures for law enforcement and courts to follow when a victim of domestic violence goes missing. As you can see from Rebekah's story this is an extremely important but overlooked area of concern in missing persons cases.

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Sincerely,

Signature

Your address:

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The Honorable Chris Murphy
136 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

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The Honorable John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

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Dear Senator Cornyn:

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The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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The Honorable John Hoeven
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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Send this letter to the senators introducing the bipartisan legislation:

Thom Tillis
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

<https://www.tillis.senate.gov/email-me>

Chris Murphy
136 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

<https://www.murphy.senate.gov/contact>

John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

<https://www.cornyn.senate.gov/node/5853>

Richard Blumenthal (CT)
706 Hart Senate
Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

<https://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/contact/write-to-senator-blumenthal>

John Hoeven
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

<https://www.hoeven.senate.gov/contact/email-the-senator/form>