

House Bill 124 Written Testimony

Seven thousand two hundred and fifty-three days. It took me approximately 7,253 days to report the horrendous crimes that were done to me. Every single one of those days has been marred by flashbacks, emotional distress, fear, panic, a feeling of complete loss of control. The trauma I endured has shaped my everyday life, it has taken my soul, changed me completely, and it has now physically influenced my health.

My experience started from one of pure innocence. In 8th grade my parents moved my sister and I from the Northland area to a suburb so that we could be in the best schools. We were loving our new home, I made lifelong friends, and it's a great community. In January of 8th grade, a boy moved back to town and I caught his eye immediately. We began to date; I was on cloud nine as I suddenly had my first boyfriend and my first kiss. The good times were short lived though as he broke up with me quickly after I refused to be physical with him. While he had lost his virginity at age 12 and was eager to introduce me to all of the sexual bases, he had just been my first kiss and I was completely new to the whole idea of dating in general. I had never even thought of going past a kiss! A little time passed, and we began dating again during the Fall of my ninth grade year. He started pressuring me to be more physical with him and I consistently turned him down. I just was not ready. One night in January 2003, right after the Buckeyes won the National Championship, we were playing hide-n-go-seek in his parents' basement with another couple. This was not your average basement size, so playing hide-n-go-seek was basically code for each couple going to opposite ends of the basement and snuggling, flirting and kissing where no one could see or hear you...at least that's what I thought was happening. I was excited to kiss my boyfriend – he was almost 6ft tall already, gorgeous, popular. I was a very competitive club soccer player that played in the US Youth Soccer's National League and I planned on continuing my playing career in college. I was very focused on that plan, as well as my schoolwork and I loved that he was serious about his life and his career dreams too – we really bonded over those similarities when we first met. I loved him, but I was not ready to have sex with him and I had made that very clear. We were both only 14 for goodness sakes, a kiss was the only thing my mind could fathom. Unfortunately, my innocent plans weren't on his agenda that night. Pretty quickly, he had me pinned on my back and what started as an innocent kiss turned into him having my pants down and

me asking him to stop, to me asking him if that was his finger. When I started to realize it wasn't his finger, I'll never forget the cold shiver that ran down my spine and the cold heat that ran over my face like I was going to be sick and cry at the same time. I asked him to stop. He secured his place over me and pinned me in with his brown eyes hovering over me, saying something about this being our only opportunity to do this. I pled with him "no, please I don't want to" but it was falling on deaf ears as he was already taking what he wanted. He wasn't paying any attention to me. At that point I just remember crying silently. At that point in my life I really wanted the person I had sex with to be the person I married, so in that moment I felt the weight of the world on me, as I thought I now have to convince this boy to marry me and I can't even get him to pay attention to me long enough for him to realize I don't want to have sex with him! I was beyond devastated. I didn't want this to be happening. I just wanted it to stop. At some point, our friends came in to "find" us and we were surrounded by enough blankets that they had no idea what was going on. I was too stunned and shocked to say anything. I didn't want to believe that my beloved boyfriend would do this to me. Maybe I could fix this, maybe I could get him to realize what he had done and apologize to me. Surely he would never do this again, right?

Wrong. Different depictions of this type of scenario went on for almost a full year. When I'd resist, he'd tell me he'd go find another girl to get the job done. He'd tell me I wasn't as pretty as other girls and he'd specify what exactly was wrong with me. He'd say the only reason he'd keep me around was if I did what he wanted sexually. On weekends we weren't hanging out, he'd have girls call me from his cell phone to tell me they were fucking my boyfriend, and I'd hear him laughing in the background. If I tried to stop what we were doing sexually, he forced it by choking me, shoving me down, holding me still. I'd mentally go into blackouts so that I didn't fully remember the entirety of the moment, but I remember enough. Some of the more horrible times were when he raped me anally and when he used metal paintball cartridges as dildos on me. He did the latter because he thought it was funny even though it was very painful for me. I didn't know how to stand up to him so I froze. Especially after he anally raped me...I was terrified of him after that, and that happened relatively soon after the abuse initially started, so I very quickly stopped trying to resist out of fear. He was positioned behind me, having sex with me, I was waiting for it to end as usual...he pulled out and quickly shoved himself into my anus. No warning, nothing. I've never felt pain like that. I screamed and cried out "No!" and tried to turn around and stop him, but he

pushed me down on the bed and told me to shut up, and he held me there, my face buried in the mattress. It felt like my organs were being ripped apart, like my stomach was being jabbed. I thought I was going to be sick as I cried. I felt tearing. I have a vague memory of my ex realizing I had bled on the bed and being upset, but I'm not completely sure if that's from this event or blending with something else. I do know that I immediately went to the bathroom afterwards and sat on the toilet to cry and I remember blood streaming out of me. I think that this was one of the few incidents he actually waited in the room for me instead of leaving me behind alone and naked as usual, and in hindsight, I think that if I had been given that time alone to actually process what had just happened past just crying for a few seconds out of pain, I would have told someone. But he hovered around the door, telling me to hurry up, so I didn't have time to process it; I had to clean myself up and wipe my tears and go downstairs and interact with his family like everything was perfectly fine. For days afterwards, maybe longer, I bled when I tried to go to the bathroom. A few years later I was actually diagnosed with internal hemorrhoids and it still flares when I'm stressed, particularly when I have a PTSD trigger – I've often wondered if that's from being violently anally raped.

My childhood boyfriend anally raped me a few more times but used soap as a lubricant to make it easier on me. Of course, the soap stung and burnt horribly so it was really just more torture, but always more humor for him. He told his friends that I was letting him do all of this stuff so they'd make gestures at me and joke and laugh whenever they saw me in the halls at school. That just pushed this narrative in my mind that, *“Yes, this is my fault, I’m allowing him to do this to me. And his friends know you’re a slut now too, how could you do this?!”* I hated myself more and more everyday. The often sarcastically used phrase of “wanting to curl into a ball and die” really rang literal for me though when he invited his brother and at least 2, but potentially 5, of his friends into his bedroom with us to watch a sex act he was performing on me without my consent. Them watching eventually led to at least one person participating. When he invited them in to watch, I remember a rush of panic hitting me very similar to the first time he raped me. I begged him not to but he had me pinned down with one of those paintball cartridges inside of me so I couldn't move. To this day, I've never been more terrified in my life. I was surrounded and trapped. Naked, alone even though I was surrounded, exposed, with nowhere to go but facing a group of boys who were staring at me in amazement. To this day, any time I'm in a small

group of people, all I can see are those 4-7 faces surrounding me, staring at my exposed vagina, jaws dropped or smiling, and cheering my ex on as he worked the cartridge like a dildo and told me to tell everyone how much I liked it as he laughed. I then flash to him handing it off to one of his friends to take a turn, me pleading with them not to, it beginning anyway. Every time my memory gets up to the person's face – it's one of two people – it blurs out and I can't make it out for sure. I don't know why my memory is blocking this part out still, probably to protect me. "Tell him how much you like it," my ex said with a huge grin on his face. He always had a huge grin on his face during these events. I remember just being devastated by how much joy he took in all this. Couldn't he see how much I didn't enjoy this? Why didn't he care? I don't know what all happened with the participants as the blackout takes over fully from there, trying to protect me from the memory. It was one of those horrific traumas where even while it was happening, I never felt like I was inside of my own body; I watched it happen from above and there are flashes of memories - for example, I'm pretty sure my ex had sex with me in front of everyone at one point, but I'm honestly not sure. The rest is blocked out. Did anyone else participate? How did it end? I have no idea. That eats at me, but sometimes I think it's for the better. I don't hold any grudges against the participants as my ex genuinely had all of the power in every relationship. His family had money and prominence, so everyone just followed what he did or said. I just hope that as adults they might look back on that situation and realize how wrong it was, and do the right thing and come forward to help me. One of the participants in the group event was also there the night my ex first raped me, and years later he actually approached me and, out of remorse, offered to testify on my behalf if I ever decided to come forward to the police. Maybe I could have gotten some answers as to what all happened. Unfortunately, he has since gone back on that offer.

Not only was the relationship with my ex sexually abusive, it was mentally and emotionally abusive. I was so ashamed of what was happening that I hid everything from everyone. I started struggling with bulimia. I was also injured at the time and couldn't play soccer that year nor was I sure if I'd be able to continue playing again at all. Not being able to play soccer that year had taken my identity from me and I was completely lost without it, afterall, this was something I spent 5 or 6 days a week doing, my parents and I were planning on soccer getting me a full ride to college, it was genuinely my entire life. My ex used this knowledge against me – he knew I was really struggling with that and

he'd make comments about me not playing soccer anymore and how I wished I was, keying in on my low confidence. I became a ghost of myself. In my mind, what was happening was my fault. If I was pretty enough, if I wasn't injured, if I was skinny enough, if I was at all enough for him...he wouldn't be doing this to me. But I wasn't, so I deserved it, and I kept my mouth shut and never said a word. The relationship would have kept going just like that, except one day I was at the house with my ex's sister, and one of my best friends showed up, with my ex announcing she was now with him. And just like that, with an evil grin on his face, he was done with me. I have since found out that he pressured her into a similar situation at least once and used some of the exact same tactics. When she revealed her story to me, I almost vomited, parts of it were like listening to myself speak. How many girls has he done this to?

I was deeply hurting throughout the year that my trauma occurred but refused to deal with it or address it, or even really admit what happened until a few years later. I didn't tell a single soul about any of this until the summer of 2008, 5 years after I was abused. I blocked out so much for so long. First, I was doing it just to get over him since he was also my first love, then I was trying to just get through high school intact. Next it was trying to get through college and starting a brand new chapter of my life. When you go through trauma, especially trauma that you don't understand, I think it's natural to just want to run from it. I ran like hell. I even went through a period where I was a little careless in situations because I was so focused on running from what had happened. Now, I was an overall good kid with her head on straight, but I'd find myself being more apt to a little danger. I was drinking to excess, I was struggling with bulimia and anorexia, I started using Nyquil to go to sleep. I was looking for an escape. If a fight broke out at a party, I found myself staying in the middle of it instead of running away when I certainly had no business being there. In hindsight, I think this was my way of standing up for myself when I couldn't before - I felt like it was all my fault and I desperately wanted to feel like I could stand up and correct it somehow. I was able to mask and hide most of these struggles, and when I couldn't they were all things that could be chalked up to "the struggles of being a modern young woman with stress and insecurity." But I knew where all of my stress and insecurity came from. It came from the sense of total and complete panic I felt ever since that first moment when he had me pinned down and started taking what he wanted even as I said no, as the chill ran down my spine, as I felt I was going to be sick. It came from the panic I felt in every one of those moments my ex raped and

abused me after that and made me feel like nothing more than the dirt he walked on. It came from every moment where I cried, wondering why he would do this to me, why he would put me in this situation, why he would make me do this when he knew how much I didn't want to. Why did he think this was funny when he could see I was upset or crying? Why did he hate me this much? Why wasn't I good enough? If I was good enough, he wouldn't be doing this to me. If I just listened to him, maybe he'd stop. If I just let him do what he wanted this time, maybe he wouldn't make me do it again. If I just stop crying and act like it's ok, maybe he'll stop and I can go home. These thoughts began to finally break through to a point where I couldn't keep them out anymore. I started having vivid flashbacks of events when I tried to be intimate with my first serious boyfriend in college. My college boyfriend was my first good thing since my trauma, my first real love, and I couldn't be intimate with him. I started getting horrible flashbacks, I'd see my ex instead of him over top of me, I'd start breaking out in a cold sweat and have a panic attack. But I had never told anyone what happened and I couldn't really give my boyfriend a reason for my panic. Then, in the summer of 2008 I had to have a colonoscopy. When the doctor attempted to start the procedure, I had a massive panic attack and began to kick and push the doctor and nurses in the OR. They had to put me under anesthesia in order to calm me down and complete the procedure. When I woke up, I had nurses surrounding me asking me when I was assaulted and my mom was crying. My secret was out.

I was immediately put into therapy and I began to talk about my experience a little bit. I mostly talked about the anal rape, I had a hard time getting my mind to venture into any other memories. I'd get a quick flicker of a memory and then my mind would just shut down...I just couldn't go there for whatever reason. I wasn't ready. My relationship fell apart, as all of mine have over the years. I couldn't explain what was in my head back then, I'm still having trouble with it now. Trust and intimacy are complicated for me...they don't come naturally and they definitely don't come easily. By late 2008 I decided that a few months of therapy meant I was fully healed, and since my ex had been messaging me in a flirtatious manner, I wrote him a letter confronting him about some of what he had done to me. It really was only a partial confrontation, as I've reread it now and I gave him passes on a lot of things in that letter. At that point in time I hadn't actually ever reviewed the memory of my first time, or the first time he raped me. I refused to look at that memory until just a couple of years ago. I think I was terrified to admit

that my first time was rape. My answer when therapists would ask what happened would always be "Well I didn't want to and then it just happened." So in my letter to him I actually wrote that I gave him consent but that it was out of fear – that's rape anyways, but either way that's not what happened. I was just too terrified at that point in my healing process to actually look at the memory that I made something up so that we could quickly move past it. I let him off the hook in that letter. I never even mentioned the group event. I didn't mention a lot of things specifically – I just alluded to the fact that what went on between us was anything but loving and consensual. We ended up meeting in person to discuss it and he apologized. He asked if I wanted anything from him (I'm assuming money) and stated that he wanted to make sure that this never got out to the media as it'd ruin his career and reputation. I told him that I genuinely just wanted him to know how his actions had affected me so that he could change his approach to women and not make the same mistakes when the right one comes along. For a bit I really thought he heard me and that he was actually sorry. And then he started flirting with me again, trying to touch me inappropriately, and playing the same games he used to. It all had fallen on the same deaf ears that I had encountered as the first night he raped me.

Even after that conversation with him, I never thought about coming forward or reporting him. At the time, we both still lived in the suburb we had grown up in, and I thought if I walked into the police station and told them that one of their most prominent residents raped me 5 years ago, they'd laugh at me. I had just now finally gotten the courage to tell myself parts of what happened, tell my family, my very best friends...there was no way I had enough courage to tell strangers or authority figures. And again, I had only slightly peeled back the curtain on my story. I was glimpsing at one event out of dozens. I hadn't even gotten enough courage to look at the first time he raped me...I had a long way to go.

The next 8 years, I juggled therapy with trying to start my own life as an adult. I had big career dreams, the potential to make it happen, and good opportunities. My mental health suffered though and I really struggled in the workplace. I found myself having panic attacks at work, getting triggered by certain looks or words. When someone that was taller than me looked down at me in the eye, I was triggered. When someone was condescending, which happened a lot early on in my career, I was triggered. I was in a lot of small group meetings around tables

with everyone looking at me and that triggered me. I was pretty much triggered all the time but couldn't tell anyone. I had a really hard time focusing and my work suffered. I lost confidence – how did I do so well in school and work so hard my whole life for an amazing career just to fail? My depression and anxiety were growing more severe and I had also been diagnosed with PTSD. I was having nightmares every night. In 2014 I ended up having to take a leave of absence to enter a partially hospitalized program at Harding Hospital because I could no longer tell the difference between what I was dreaming and what was reality.

Relationships continued to be a struggle for me. I was terrified to have sex at all. I didn't actually understand that sex wasn't supposed to be a forced act. When it first came out that I was raped by my childhood boyfriend and I started going to therapy, I did come forward and discuss the fact that my first experience with sexual assault actually happened around age 7, with a female babysitter. I had kept this a secret for 13 years at that point and it was another one of those memories I had tried really hard to completely block out. But once things started surfacing with my ex, that memory kept creeping up too. I knew what had happened was wrong, but as a kid my babysitter told me I'd get in trouble if I didn't do what she said or if I told anyone. I have always been absolutely terrified of being in trouble or disappointing someone. That rings true to this day. So maybe that made me an easy mark, maybe my ex had an easier time manipulating me and grooming me because I was first assaulted by my babysitter at such a young age. I know that when you learn what intimate acts are in situations that are stressful, pressured, uncomfortable, painful, where you don't have a choice, where the choice is taken away from you, where it's not about what you want, and where it's only about what the other person wants...I know from experience that it's very difficult to unlearn that behavior pattern and to even understand that it's not supposed to be that way. While in the program at Harding, I talked about an event that had been weighing on me for 2 years as it just wasn't sitting right with me; when I finished sharing my story with the group, I looked up to see everyone crying and I realized I had been raped again as an adult. I was devastated...how can I not know this? I didn't understand that simply saying no should be enough. I shouldn't have to physically fight my way out of a situation for it to be considered rape. It's rape if I said no and he's still on top of me penetrating me over and over while I'm dry and crying. Sex and relationships were really confusing for me...they still are, but especially in my 20's. Everyone around me was enjoying their 20's and having this great sex life and I didn't even

understand that sex was supposed to be enjoyable. The few times I did have sex, I blacked out – not on purpose, my body automatically would go into a blackout as a mode of protection. I was engaged at one point and I don't ever remember having sex with my fiancé! I finally got to a point where I had a boyfriend I was having fun with and comfortable having sex with, and unfortunately one night I had an unexpected trigger. We stopped, I figured no big deal. I ended up in excruciating pain and doubled over at the doctor the next day. I was told that my body was basically having a physical reaction to the trigger I had the night before – I was having muscle spasms in my pelvic region as the whole area had gone into protection mode when I was triggered. I fell into a deep depression. I finally got to this good place mentally after so many years, and my body betrayed me? How can I ever escape this? How can I ever escape him and what he did to me?

Then, after a surgery on the same knee that was injured while I was being abused by my ex, I was diagnosed with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome in 2016, a disease of the nervous system. CRPS has completely changed my life, debilitating me, preventing me from being able to work at all, forcing me to live a low quality of life filled with pain and various health issues. Studies have shown that people with PTSD are more apt to develop CRPS. In a 2016 study of CRPS patients, 38% met diagnostic criteria for PTSD or 56% when including the sub-clinical criteria. That was 13 times the normal rate, or someone without CRPS. Of the patients with both CRPS and PTSD, 86% of them had PTSD before they were diagnosed with CRPS. The average symptom severity of CRPS patients with PTSD was moderate-severe causing severe functional impairment [1]. There are several theories as to why people with CRPS tend to also have PTSD. The overarching theme is that both CRPS and PTSD are caused by dysfunctions of the sympathetic nervous system (SNS), part of the peripheral and autonomic nervous system. The SNS is responsible for your “fight-or-flight” response and releases a hormone called norepinephrine. People with CRPS and PTSD both have high levels of norepinephrine in their bodies [2]. My trauma and pain therapist is a psychologist that has worked with countless veterans and CRPS patients in general. Every single one of his CRPS patients also has PTSD. What is more astounding though, is that his CRPS patients that have well-managed cases or who aren't as affected by their CRPS, their PTSD developed due to a trauma at the same time or after they were diagnosed with CRPS. His CRPS patients that have bad cases that are very resistant to

treatment, they all have PTSD from childhood trauma that went untreated for a long time, similar to my story. His theory on this phenomena is that the effect that PTSD has on a child or adolescent is much stronger as it puts the fear response (SNS, “fight-or-flight”) in overdrive and releases a highly increased amount of norepinephrine. The SNS is then highly activated, and because you are a child or adolescent and you therefore don’t have the brain development yet to properly regulate itself and come back down from that activated setting appropriately, the SNS stays highly activated (J. Moreno, personal communication, June, 5, 2025). Eventually, an injury occurs later in life, and CRPS responds to injury in our SNS by increasing norepinephrine levels and increasing the activation of peripheral nociceptors which cause pain sensations [2]. Research on the link between these two diseases has only just begun and a lot of research still needs to be done. Regardless, my doctors agree that the stress of my PTSD and its triggers flare my CRPS, creating a vicious cycle.

And so, after approximately 7,253 days, I finally got the courage to come forward when the trauma took a massive toll on my health. I’ve been undergoing treatment every couple of weeks that is a massive PTSD trigger. I need to have a nerve block in my spine to keep the swelling down in my legs so that I can walk or crutch around. I also get a nerve block in my neck that targets my PTSD and helps to alleviate some of my nightmares. Both procedures require many medical personnel in the room and multiple people touching me at one time. Again, one of the more traumatizing things my ex did to me was have a group of his friends watch and participate in a sex act with me without my consent and while I was unable to break free from it. As you can imagine, a procedure like this where I am awake is incredibly triggering and to me, it feels like I’m experiencing the same thing all over again every time. I have to go through this though in order to have any hopes of walking. When I’m in pain during the procedure and I flashback to the pain I felt that day in 2003 as my ex laughed and everyone watched as I cried, I am desperately trying to tell my brain that the same thing isn’t happening right now. My doctor gives me several oral medications to take before the procedure to calm me, he’s doubled the sedation and pain meds because my adrenaline fights it in the moment, and we go through a very careful protocol that’s taken 2 years of trial and error to establish...yet I still end up in tears every time. Every couple of weeks I relive the trauma of that one particular day so that I can continue to walk. There were many days filled with many traumas, but having to continuously put myself through this after everything he’s already taken from

me, that is what gave me the courage to finally stand up and ask for the justice I deserve.

After finally making a police report, I began exploring my legal options. I am still terrified of going to court and exposing myself to even more trauma, especially when it has the potential for media exposure. Because of my disease, I barely have a week of good days a month; do I really want to try to spend those days facing off with this monster in a courtroom? I decided that going the discreet and civil suit route was my best option. Unfortunately, I found out that the statute of limitations gave me only until I was 30 years old to file suit. I am investigating a criminal suit, but I have been warned by police that he will most likely not be charged since he was also a child at the time. It's also very hard to come up with evidence of my case that meets the criminal courts' standards, unless one of the witnesses miraculously decides to come forward. I spent 7,253 days weighing whether or not I'd ever have the courage to come forward, and when I finally did, I was essentially told it didn't matter.

But his crimes do matter. In Ohio the only crime that doesn't have a statute of limitation is murder. He may not have murdered me in 2003, but he murdered my soul and he took away an incredibly large piece of me that I'll never fully recover from. How can you put a statute of limitation on that?

Healing from this trauma is a journey and a process, yet I don't think you can ever fully heal from something like this. These types of crimes are unlike any other in humanity. Taking someone's body against their will does something to the mind, body and soul that is really indescribable. It is not until one has experienced it themselves that they will truly understand, and even then, each person reacts differently. There is no time table for healing, or for how that healing fits in with the rest of that person's life. Because remember, even though a large part of the person has been taken away, they're still alive and supposed to be functioning normally according to society. Even though I was a shadow of myself, I still had to get through high school. And then college, and then my first job...life keeps moving on and you're supposed to move on with it. I was just trying to catch my breath back then. I have only in the past 4 years really begun trauma therapy and started to confront memories and work through them. It took me 16 years to get to that place mentally and emotionally, to be able to handle it.

I have been terrified to come forward about this. Terrified no one would believe me, that people would vilify me, terrified of what my ex's family status and money would do to me, that'd I'd lose my career, of what the media would do to me, terrified that my parents' careers would be ruined and my sister would be terrorized. It has taken me 20 years to not only process what was done to me, to realize that it is not normal, but also to harden my skin for the reaction of others to my coming forward. Think about that. I've had to prepare myself for 20 years for the world's feelings, and not just my own.

Maybe it took losing the life I knew and the future I dreamt of, to gain the courage to genuinely be okay with what I have and accept what I am. My skin is thick enough now. You can call me what you want – say I'm a liar, a gold digger, ask why I didn't come forward back then. I'd then challenge you to come watch my next nerve block. Watch the relaxation rituals I go through the night before to try to calm myself down, and how much my hands are still shaking despite that. Watch what medicine I take the night before, what medicine I take the morning of. Watch how I go from my perky self to a quiet shell of that person. Watch how I fidget, how my hands tremble, my eyes are constantly watering as I wait to go back to pre-op. Watch as I explain to the fellow what the protocol is for my case and why. Sometimes that conversation isn't an easy one so be prepared for me to break down in tears. That may happen again when I have to explain the same thing to the head nurse. Watch as I continue to tremble and my eyes fill with tears once we're in the OR. There are 5-6 people in the room...the same as that day with my ex. They're all looking at me. They'll give me Benadryl and one dose of the sedative before they move me to the table to try to help with my triggers, so they'll let it kick in for about a minute. But then I'll start to move and I'll remind everyone that only one person can touch me at a time. The first person will announce themselves and tell me what they're going to do. Then they'll touch me, and my heart rate spikes...it's happening. The worst is when they have to fold my underwear down and put a sterile towel along my butt and lower back. Every time they do that I feel like I'm going to vomit. I try my best to remain calm but I'm already starting to spiral downwards. Each person takes turns, but eventually they start to overlap and it's too quick. I squeeze my eyes shut tight and start to cry a little, saying to myself "this isn't the same, this isn't the same." Once I'm prepped, my doctor has the nurse give me my first dose of fentanyl. She then sits by my head and holds my hands for comfort. I hold on to them like I'm going to die if I let go. At the first sign of pain, my doctor calls for the second

dose of sedation. He knows that if I'm verbally expressing pain and he doesn't do anything about it, I go right back to one of the many times I was being forcefully raped and saying it hurt, yet being told to shut up. The procedure continues and I again express pain, so my doctor calls for the second dose of fentanyl. I'm still holding the nurse's hands like a vice grip. Unfortunately, we hit a very touchy spot of the nerve and I'm in a great deal of pain, yet my doctor can't give me any more medication as he's reached his limit based on regulations. I start to panic and lose it. Flashbacks swarm me. My doctor and the nurse try to talk me through it – "We're almost done, just 30 seconds, you can do it" – but I'm in tears and gone. I lay there limp for a few minutes and cry to myself after everyone starts clearing out. Just like I did every time he left me alone in the room after he raped me. I feel so alone and hollow. I can't escape it.

But I can finally face it. And I should be able to on my terms. So please do the right thing and give me the chance to do that. I wasn't able to stand up for myself then, please give me the chance to stand up for myself now...Pass House Bill 124.

References

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