

Dear Madam Chair Larson and Committee members,

Regarding HB 1145 Criminal Statutes.

My name is Harriette Rebsom, the mother of A [REDACTED] R [REDACTED] who was raped at age 10 and sexually assaulted at age 18. We have been on this long journey for 29 years. I am asking that the victims of sexual assault get what they should have been afforded years ago! No criminal statutes of limitation for sexual abuse. If this had been in place we would not have needed to be here fighting for the justice of future victims right now.

I want to thank the House for recommending the statutes increase from 3 years to 7 years. In reality that is not enough, this is another token law which still gives the perpetrator power. At 7 years our daughter was just beginning to come out of that dark place, I doubt she would have been able to pursue justice due to her PTSD and disabling mental condition -she still needed more time to heal.

Let's compare sexual abuse victims to high school students taking their ACT. If you get a good grade you get into a better college. Sexual abuse victims who are strong and healthier-aka a better grade are more likely to get justice. If you get a bad grade your ability to get into a good college is decreased. For sexual abuse victims who have a bad grade...aka their mental status is not strong enough-they get denied justice. You can study more and retake an ACT test, a sexual abuse victim can get more counselling and get stronger but they never get a redo! That door to justice is slammed shut forever.

My daughter has her police report from 29 years ago which clearly shows cause and is all she needs to pursue justice-yet she is being denied that.

I am amazed at the fact that we use the excuse: "Witnesses' accounts are no longer accurate after so many years." How many rapes and sexual assaults have a witness? Yet we use this as an "excuse" to deny them enough time to seek justice.

Or is the victim the witness? What exactly do they need to remember accurate? In reality research says that significant happenings like this are not forgotten. It is noted 2% of allegations are false, though one report said 2-10%.

Because of this fear we are denying 100 % of these victims' justice if not pursued in a timely manner and we are allowing 100% of those sexual predators to go free.

Are not the victims also innocent? What do we offer them?!!!

I am having a hard time seeing the "Scale of justice." Liberty and justice are really not for all!

This is a chance for North Dakota to make a real difference in the lives of these victims, to stand up and say we support you, you are not alone! Please hold the perpetrator accountable, there should be no statutes of limitation for the benefit of the criminal!

Thank you for your time,

Harriette Rebsom