

03/13/2023

Dear Charmin Klemin and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my support for HB 1145. This bill is a huge step forward to bring justice to sexual assault victims. The average age that most sexual assault victims disclose their sexual abuse is 52 years of age. Why so late? Some fear that they won't be believed. Some actually believe that it was somehow their fault. Many others experience PTSD and other mental and behavioral issues that do not allow them to come forward until later in their lives. They are young children suddenly thrown into a dark place and they are not mature enough to understand the impacts it will have upon their lives. The percentage of women incarcerated in North Dakota jails who experienced a sexual assault is 86%. That is too large of a percentage to be ignored. A sexual assault is a horrific, unimaginable crime that affects victims for the rest of their lives. Why are we letting an abuser go Scot-free after 7 years while the victim gets a life sentence. A crime that affects a victim for life does not deserve a statute of limitation. Ignoring crimes like these opens the door for people like Jeffery Epstein and his many clients. Sadly, this is where we have come to as a society by not taking decisive action. Let's learn from past mistakes and take a stand to protect our children. There should be no criminal statute of limitations for a crime as reprehensible as sexual abuse.

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