

Dear Chairman Larson and Committee Members,

January 27, 2023

My name is Harriette Rebsom, I am the mother of A [REDACTED] R [REDACTED], who was sexually assaulted at the age of 18 while in the Intensive Care Unit of our hospital. She was not able to seek justice due to her mental health as a direct result of this abuse and then again because of the statues of limitations in place.

Sexual abuse destroys these victim's lives, 33% contemplate suicide and 13% attempt suicide. Those assaulted before age 16 are at an even greater risk with attempts occurring 3-4 times more than those after age 16. Our daughter who had been previously raped at the age of ten was one of those statistics. As a result of her sexual abuse, she had two serious suicide attempts before the age of 18. Can you even imagine our daughters state of mind at those times? At age 17 our daughter unsuccessfully attempted to die by suicide. We admitted her to the Mental Health Unit of the hospital. She was so distraught she could not walk so my husband carried her. It took many weeks for them to find out she had been sexually abused and even longer until she was able to hint at who it was. When a 10-year-old is sexually assaulted and the abuser tells them if you say anything "I will kill your family," they believe. They still believe-even at age 17!

While on suicide precautions at the Mental Health Unit, through a series of unfortunate events she came very close to dying after taking a full bottle of someone's heart pills. We were told by one of the doctor's "She could have died, she should have died, I have no reasonable explanation for why she is still alive or what just happened in there....., but she will be OK."

Her PTSD was severe. The worst they had ever seen is what we were told. Eventually she was able to get weekend passes to come home. One weekend she overdosed on caffeine pills and was taken to the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital. The next morning, I was met by the head Social Worker of the Mental Health Unit. She told me A [REDACTED] had made some serious allegations against the male nurse that night, and that it was most likely a "bad dream." I thought to myself she is 'mandated' by law to investigate and

report. It will be taken care of. As time passed, I never heard anything back. All I could assume was they had not found anything to substantiate her allegations. I believed A [REDACTED] but what more could we do?

Over one year later that same male nurse sexually assaulted a 14-year-old girl in the hospital. This time he was being charged. My daughter saw it in the paper and said "that's who assaulted me." She wanted to help but because of her mental health was too fearful to face him in court. She was able to provide the detective with her affidavit that was later used in court. Upon his investigation he said the male nurses charting did not indicate any wrongdoing, I thought why would he incriminate himself? He interviewed the female nurse on duty that night. Her testimony confirmed A [REDACTED]'s story! That is when I realized the Hospital had never reported this to authorities and the only "investigating" they had done was talk to that male nurse. Why was this never reported to authorities? Why didn't anyone from the hospital interview that female nurse? It would have been that simple. They had blatantly ignored the law.

A [REDACTED] was told she too could take him to court, but because of her mental health she was not strong enough. We were not going to force her. Her mental wellbeing was more important to us than money at that time. For years our family has carried anger and sadness that the hospital never investigated A [REDACTED]'s sexual assault thoroughly, that the staff never believed her, and that they told her to never talk about this again. We were told by the social workers he would never do such a thing-he was a good family man and highly respected. Everything seemed so surreal.

Our hospital bill was around \$90,000. Insurance paid a onetime \$10,000. Eventually our bill went to a collection agency-they wanted more. Because of all the injustices our daughter received by the neglect of the hospital I refused to pay the hundreds of dollars asked. \$50/month was all we could afford at the time. The agency asked for a financial report, maybe they could get the bill reduced. I spent weeks gathering all this information. I included in the letter the entire story of our daughter's sexual assault, noting nothing had been investigated and that they did not believe her. I hand delivered the letter. Several months later they wanted another statement, saying they had lost the letter! I was devastated! I

told them “No!, you have it, you find it.” We never did get a reduced bill. We have been making those payments for 29 years. Recently we spoke to another attorney who also advised us to continue with the payments, otherwise it could ruin our credit rating and they could take us to court. Last Fall I finally got the courage to call the collections agency to see what we still owed-it was over \$67,000. He said our file had a note to not contact us. Interesting? Had they found my letter? I am asking for justice for our daughter and our family and anyone else in our situation. We have the proof of a sexual crime, proof of wrongdoing by the hospital and yet our daughter cannot get justice because the statute of limitations clock has run out.

Sexual predators get their moment of gratification while the victims are left to deal with a lifetime of trauma from being sexually abused. The victim has to spend their money on counseling while the perpetrator gets to go on with their life as if nothing happened. If our daughter were to need a new car, she would have to stop counseling to make her payments. The victim didn't choose to be sexually assaulted, yet they have to live with this emotional and financial burden for the rest of their lives. The possibility of civil justice is the only justice our family and others have left in this long journey.

I ask for a DO PASS recommendation for SB 2282

Thank you for your time.