

Testimony of Greg Grengs

Hello, my name is Greg Grengs. I appreciate the opportunity to testify amongst the representatives, and for my story to be heard.

I'm a fourth generation farmer from Sherwood, North Dakota and have recently been through a terrible divorce.

I took over the family farm when I was 14 years of age. My father was in an accident, became disabled and eventually lost both of his legs. At the age of 27 I married a beautiful young lady and took her elementary aged son under my wing. During our marriage we had my daughter.

Our marriage was full of adultery on my wife's part, but I stuck it out with her until the kids got old enough to be independent. During our marriage I tried to put a stop to the adultery and had my ex-wife sign a post-marital agreement to protect the farming entity. I wanted the farm to stay a viable unit to pass on to the kids and grandkids.

Three years later the adultery did not stop, so I filed for divorce. About six months into my divorce, my ex-wife's attorney went to my farmland landlords and defamed me libel per-se. She accused me of forging rental contracts and much more creating the first of many attempts to ruin my livelihood. I filed a defamation lawsuit against her, and my fate was sealed. You see, that attorney is from the same small town as the judge and works with him on a daily basis. She also worked for the judge's father years earlier. This same judge was assigned the case, but recused himself from the defamation suit due to their relationship. Things became personal, and it showed with the rulings. After that, the judge threw out my post-marital agreement, and everything went down-hill from there. My wife testified four different stories about the marital agreement, but finally settled on the fact she didn't have proper financial disclosure and that I wouldn't give her a copy to read. She testified she did the books, paid bills, sat in on income tax meetings with the accountant, and had access to all financial records. A balance sheet was even presented with her signature on it that was built very close to the same time. She told the judge, yes that was her signature on that financial document, but she didn't read it. The notary testified she and I had our own complete copies and she notarized both of them. The judge still threw it out.

Soon after the post-marital agreement was thrown out, it became a mission for her to destroy me through the courts. I was paying \$4,000 a month spousal support, taking care of my daughter who was living with me, paying my ex-wife's car payment, health insurance and all of her attorney fees. She filed a motion with the court to include her own son's assets, under his name, into the divorce due to the fact that he used the family farms equipment to put his crop in. This attempt wouldn't have even been thought of if this bill was in place.

She filed an illegal lis pendens on my farming entity, which wasn't a party to the divorce either. My crops were hailed out in 2018 and I couldn't pay back my operating loan. The bank wouldn't loan me more money without restructuring and that was impossible with the Lis pendens filed. I

put a motion to the court in April begging him to release it so I could keep farming. The judge didn't rule until July, after planting was well over, and he ruled against it.

It was obvious that I was not going to survive his trial as it looked like he was planning to sell me out. In order to avoid seeing my family farm ripped apart and auctioned off to the public, I settled with my ex for a ridiculous sum of cash. The sum was about 70% of my net worth. A majority of my assets were bought before marriage, and some were bequeathed to me shortly before and during the divorce. My plan was to appeal the marital agreement after the judgment was signed and hope the Supreme Court would help me out. I filed the appeal but the SC wouldn't rule on the marital agreement due to the fact the judgement was now contract law.

I am now in bankruptcy and am desperately trying to hold onto my farm. A few years of marriage should not equal to half of what generations before us have built. Please pass this bill into law. My divorce would not have gone on for four years and cost me hundreds of thousands in attorney fees if there would have been a clear path for the judge to follow. My mental health would not have hit rock bottom and my farm would still be thriving. If this bill gets passed into law, most divorce cases won't even go to trial saving both the parties and the taxpayers money in court costs. It's too late for my farm and me, but if one generational family farm or business can be saved from me speaking to all of you today, then I can hold my head high and have something to be proud of after all of these years of treachery my kids and I have gone through.