

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Keri Strahler and come before you as a mother that went through the system with my children and ultimately got them back in custody.

My story starts as I was working as a surgical technologist that had a nervous breakdown after 20 years of witnessing trauma, but unlike my burned out friends that turned to controlled substances to self soothe, I took up photography.

Unable to care for my kids, they were brought into the system for neglect where the judge monitoring our case ordered random UAs and a mental health assessment.

With my children out of the home, no job and our home going into foreclosure, there wasn't much to live for, but the judge saved my life in ordering the mental health assessment.

I learned through diagnosis that I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and something called Dissociative Identity Disorder, or multiple personalities. The latter was a defense mechanism to the trauma I'd witnessed and my very existence through therapy was carried by the hope that I would eventually get to spend time with my children again.

I looked forward to supervised visitation days when I could be near them, knowing full well that if I didn't comply with TFI's rules or the court ordered random UAs, I would miss this opportunity and I come before you with a burden on my heart for parents working to get their children back that might miss their scheduled visitation due to tardiness.

While in anger management counseling, I was blessed with a moment to speak with a foster parent whom had had her ward in therapy for separation anxiety. Children do suffer when separated from their biological parents and those moments together mean so much to the child and parent. Please consider this bill as it serves the best interest of the child and I thank you for your time.