

Written Testimony for SB 317
Senate Judiciary Committee

Greetings committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. Special thank you to Senator Warren for giving this legislation a hearing today.

I was born in 1972 in the small unincorporated predominantly Catholic town of Baileyville Ks.

At the age of 3 my life changed drastically. My parents were declared unfit due to my mother's neglect of us and my 3 brothers and I were removed from the home.

In August of 1975 the day we were removed from the home was the same night my father shot himself in our living room. Two days after being removed from the home we had to go to his funeral and then go back to our respective foster homes.

At the age of 5 we were reunited with our grandparents and our mom who still lived in Baileyville Ks. At the age of 6 my mom decided that my grandparents had everything under control and abandoned us, leaving our grandparents to raise us.

At the age of 10 my grandfather who was physically abusing me began to also sexually abuse me. Physical abuse included but was not limited to being whipped with a bullwhip, thrown around my room like a rag doll and once being beaten until I almost urinated myself. Throw into this mix emotional abuse. The sexual abuse started as fondling and moved into oral sex and penetrating my vagina with his fingers. This is just the tip of the iceberg of what I went through for 8 yrs. The physical abuse started at the age of 7. During this time I attempted suicide twice and tried to run away a couple of times. Running away never worked. My grandfather controlled the whole county.

The last straw was at the age of 15 when I discovered my brothers had been going into my room and taking things. I stated vehemently that no one was allowed in my room. My grandfather went off and called me a bitch, whore and a slut and told me he could go into my room anytime he felt like it. He ransacked my room, tearing my curtains off my windows, turning my bed upside down and taking all of my drawers out of my dresser then dumping my clothes out. After I was done hanging up laundry outside I had to go back inside and clean up my room. After he had fallen asleep after Sunday dinner I lied to my grandma and told her I was going to bike the back roads. Instead I biked to nearby Seneca Ks and found my HS counselor and told her I was not going back home and that I would kill her or kill myself before I went back home. She finally helped me out like she should have been doing all along.

During the time I spent in a foster home after finally being removed I talked to our Catholic priest and the only advice he gave me was to go back home and pray that the situation gets better. How can anyone tell a child to go back to being sexually abused and pray that it gets better? I knew that was really code for your grandfather is president of the altar guild and a significant financial contributor to the church so I'm not going to do anything to help you out. Over the

course of the last 2 years before getting out I tried to get people to listen to me and help me get out but no one would go against my grandfather.

My grandfather never got so much as even a slap on the wrist for what he did to me. He passed away a few years ago. I may not be able to collect civil damages from him for what he did to me if the SOL bill becomes law but it would certainly help to open the door for me to hopefully collect civil damages from those who stood by and did nothing to help me.

I would like to say to every member of this committee that there are countless others like myself who this legislation would help. Sexual abuse survivors deserve justice. Hear us.