

March 23rd, 2023

Kansas State Capitol
Senate Committee on Judiciary
RM 346-S
SW 8th & SW Van Buren
Topeka, KS 66612

Reference: SB 317 - Protecting Children Everywhere Act

Good morning,

My name is Earl McIntosh, and I am a childhood sexual assault/abuse victim. While I still struggle, I am no longer ashamed to share about my experience. I am hopeful that my testimony can help or encourage someone else.

My sexual assault happened when I was 10 years old. One Saturday morning I was playing in my front yard by myself when a high school neighbor asked if I would like to go fishing and exploring with him at his parent's cabin. I didn't even tell my family I was leaving as I jumped in his car.

Once we arrived at the cabin, my neighbor's disposition changed quickly. He became aggressive and physically forced me to remove all my clothing. For the next several hours I was sexually molested.

As a 10-year-old I didn't even know what sex was. I didn't have a clue what he was doing to me. My innocence was robbed. He threatened to harm me if I told anyone including my parents or friends, so I buried the terrifying experience deep inside me.

I was in shock when I arrived home. I struggled to make sense of what had happened to me. Out of fear of retaliation, I didn't tell anyone. However, the repercussions were severe. Prior to being molested, I was a good student with good grades. After being sexually molested, I developed a bad attitude and my grades suffered. I became angry and distrustful of authority and took my emotions out on weak teachers and people of authority. I started drinking alcohol and chewing tobacco before the age of 12. My relationships with my friends suffered greatly. I had trust issues as I began dating.

My anxiety kept building until I finally confided in my wife and parents at the age of 36. I didn't seek professional counseling until my early 50s. I am 57 and I am finally at a point where I can share my story with others. However, I still struggle with anxiety as a result. I have learned to mask my emotions in front of others, but I can't hide it from my family and close friends.

I'm sad to say the person who sexually assaulted me is still out in the public and has never been held accountable. A few years ago, I filed a complaint with the Allen County Sheriff in Iola, KS. They were unable to act on the complaint because of the amount of

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time that had elapsed. However, my attacker knows I have now come forward. While researching, I discovered my attacker helps with an organization called the "Watch D.O.G.S." This is a group of men who mentor and watch out for young kids in schools to keep them safe. This is a KS school program, and my molester was involved in this organization. It is ironic and sickening that he is involved in a program trying to protect young children from people like himself.

I've included a photo of me as a young boy. Please reflect on this photo for a moment. I want you to see me as an innocent child full of joy, life, and potential. That innocence was robbed, and my life forever changed.

I am very grateful to Senate President Masterson for meeting with us to listen to our very personal and painful stories. I am also grateful to Senator Warren for her hard work crafting this important legislation. To the rest of you, please vote to approve SB 317 and bring it to the floor for a vote. This bill won't benefit me. I am not here advocating for myself. However, this legislation is bigger than me. I am here advocating for my fellow brothers and sisters that have suffered alongside me while their attackers roam free. Please help them. They deserve justice.

Sincerely,

Earl McIntosh

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