

Angel Cushing in favor of HB 2071

Angel (Georganna) Cushing, Allen, Kansas

To Chairman Carpenter and Representatives of the Health and Human Services Committee,

Are you old enough to remember those white colored mattresses with the blue pin stripes? They had no springs in them and were stuffed with a goose down, wool, cotton or other stuffing. They were laid on a stretch type wiring that reached across the width and length of the frame of the bed. It was the days before box springs found their way into the poorest of households.

Some of my first memories were of being tightly rolled into one of those mattresses while older siblings and their friends wagered on how long it would take me to fall unconscious.

By the time I was 8 years old, Social Services was involved in my household. I specifically recall the doctor telling my aunt that I had tested positive for THC. I didn't do drugs.

Social Services never did remove me from the home. They said they could not legally take custody of a child from people who did not have custody. This family was not my flesh and blood. I was not related to them by marriage. I had been left with them by my natural mother who never returned. There was no name on my birth certificate for father. I had not been abandoned, Social Services said, so there was nothing they could do. Their intervention however, taught me that I was not required to have sex with everyone that anyone in the household demanded. The verbal threat of "telling" ended my requirement of paying for debts.

By the time I was ten years old, I had used every drug known to be on the street in the 1980s. Two of my older siblings just hated to "party alone". They would lock me in a cupboard or closet or simply hit me until I complied while saying that I had to "party" with them so I would not tell on them. *"Because you are doing it too."*

Eventually, I recognized that if I stayed in that home my future only promised to make me a witness, a participant, or a victim to criminal activity. I was out by the age of 16.

During all of that abuse of my childhood, not once was I ever subjected to invasive medical procedures. I am very blessed and overwhelmed with gratitude. I just cannot fathom having to live 50 or 60 years, a whole lifetime, after enduring such horror.

Please support HB 2071.

Sincerely,



Angel Cushing. Allen, KS