

TESTAMONY BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE IN OPPOSITION TO HB 2469

My name is Joan Kusek and I am pleading on the behalf of victims who have died at the hands of individuals who are currently serving time in prison for heinous crimes. Please do not do as the House did and extend the time for prisoners who are said to be “terminally ill” to leave prison early (HB 2469). Not only are the voiceless victims of children and other individuals who were murdered are not being heard but all their family members, friends, neighbors and co-workers.

In February 2020, the House passed bill HB 2469 to extend the time in which “terminally ill” prisoners could be released to go “home” and die. I understand that people want to be compassionate and want to help those who must live out their lives in prison and that Kansas needs to save money. However, you need to understand what this does to the victims before the Senate does the same.

HB 2469 has stirred up horrible memories for those who are trying to go on with their lives and has created a reliving of unimaginable events for direct and indirect individuals. Those lives have been affected by prisoners who should have to serve the amount of time in prison as stated by our justice system.

My family has been directly affected by two events involving murder against children as well as adults who had all kinds of potential, leaving this earth too soon and not being able to live their lives as you, your family and friends.



Kylie and Hanah

STATE OF KANSAS, Appellee Rick E. FOLLIN, Appellant. No. 74874

In February 5, 1994, Rick Follin stabbed his daughters Hanah (2 years old) and Kylie (4 years old) three times resulting in death after a one-and a half hour drive with them being recorded singing child songs and reciting nursery rhymes. They were found with their father, in his truck, at Eldorado Lake in Eldorado, KS. Rick’s response when he was asked if he had killed his children was “it was his family and he could do what he wanted to.”

These lovely children were my cousin Sherri’s with whom I grew up and is more of a sister than a cousin to me. Kylie and Hanah played dress up, swam and played childhood games with my children; laughing and enjoying life together as children should. My children were 9 years and 6 years old at the time of their death and I remember having to share with them that their cousins had been killed at the hand of a man they used to call “Uncle Rick” and that their beloved “Aunt Sherri” had lost her precious children.

Hanah was a quiet child with huge eyes that could melt you in a minute and as cute as can be. Kylie was outgoing, spunky, and told her mommy that she was going to be President of the United States one day.

Sherri is a kind and compassionate woman who absolutely loved her children with all her heart. All of her family and friends cannot fathom anyone being so brutal to her children or to her. Everyone who has ever personally met Sherri loves her. Even when she was grieving the loss of her children, she supported me when my mother died (who suffered a heart attack after hearing of the children's death and died shortly thereafter). In addition, she has supported her family and friends as well as the community through their own suffering by counseling and being a great listener and who encouraging victims by helping to support the Victim's Rights act and Safe Houses.

No one EVER expects to have something of this magnitude happen to them. Unfortunately, some of us do or may in the future.

We were told 5 to 10 years ago that Rick would soon die as his health had deteriorated.

Numerous studies have shown that it is difficult to determine and sometimes impossible to know exactly when a person will die. How many times have you heard that someone has days or months to live and actually lived well beyond the doctor's expectations? When people are terminally ill, they are not always immobile or unconscious. During that time, will they have a way to communicate or visit their victims (survivors, family, friends, etc.)? Rick wanted Sherri dead and he killed her own children. How do you think she feels thinking this person may get out of prison?

We did not know about this bill until it had already passed in the House. Due to finding out about the possibility of this bill passing in the Senate, it has stirred up so many horrible memories along with nightmares and stress for those who are still trying to get on with their life after such tragedy.

My cousin told me the other day that she will never be able to see her girls grow up, go to prom, marry or have children. Imagine what that would be like to see children day in and day out or drive along I-35 and go by Eldorado Lake and imaging what your beloved children went through at the hands of this man.

Another case in which our family was affected.

STATE OF KANSAS, Appellee, v. DANNY EUGENE CRUMP, Appellant. No. 53,882

On September 20, 1980, in Olathe, Kansas, six members of the Post family died as the result of bomb which was disguised as a gift made by Danny Crump. He rigged it with 10 sticks of dynamite in order to murder his ex-wife, Diane Post Crump. Along with Diane, her sister Susie, Diane's parents (Robert and Norma Jeanne), brother Richard and James "Bobo" Post (10 years old) were killed.

David Post, who was 18 years old and in the house at the time, survived along with Randy Post, who was 4 months old and was thrown from the house and revived by a neighbor. Lori Post who was 7 years old at the time of the bombing was outside playing and remembers little about the explosion.

Diane, Susie, and David all worked for my husband at a restaurant in Olathe. Susie helped him as a supervisor and was a lovely, happy-go-luck girl who had all kinds of potential. They ALL had all kinds of potential.

This family has also suffered and relived this nightmare as well as relatives, friends, neighbors and co-workers as they must continue to go to court over and over in order to keep this person in prison. Danny Crump keeps coming up for parole which is hard enough on this family.

This bill (HR 2469) increases the time that "terminally ill" prisoners can be released from prison from 30 to 90 and possibly 120 days. This only adds to their suffering, grief and restarts their reliving of these past events affecting their ability to live happy lives.

This could happen to your children, grandchildren, friends or co-workers. How helpless it makes you feel being constantly reminded that you couldn't do anything to stop the grief and reoccurrence of these horrible memories.

However, YOU can help. YOU can help preserve what little peace these families have by making sure the extension of time for HB2469 is not passed in the Senate. Give Sherri and the Post family, their family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers the peace they deserve.

Thank you for your time and service to our State. May you be guided by your conscious and compassion for these victims by opposing the extension of time of bill HB2469.

Don't let them be victimized again.

Joan Kusek