

My name is Emily Lang. I am 19 now, but when I was 15, shopping at Forever 21 located inside of Oak Park Mall. I was in the dressing room in a state of undress when I noticed a phone propped up on a pair of jeans angled in a manner that could be used to record me. I quickly snapped a photo of the suspicious phone and redressed. Fast forward to April 2018, Johnson County Special Victims Unit Detectives found the man who did this to me. He was from Joplin, Missouri a town some 139 miles south of the Kansas City area, he, like many others, travels to commit this kind of crime. His mobile phone contained over 150 images of women in dressing rooms in varying states of undress and apparently unaware that they were being photographed. By its statutory language, this was not by definition sexually motivated until proven. He hired an expert witness to testify that there was a low to moderate chance of recidivism. In this case, he pleaded guilty to the offense in my case and stipulated that it was sexually motivated in exchange for dropping another case against him. Unfortunately reoffending against another 15-year-old girl the very next day in Johnson County.

As a teenage girl, my world has forever been changed by this experience. I am now cautious while shopping, and especially when trying on clothing. I am more cautious now because I realize the threat of being unaware. He has negatively impacted my life forever. In the era of social media, will these pictures ever show up again? I don't know.

It seems like common sense that taking photos of a 15-year-old girl in a state of undress is a sexually motivated crime. Unfortunately, laws regarding privacy have failed to keep pace with the fact that mobile cameras on phones are in nearly everyone's possession. Wiretapping

and photographing a person in a state of undress without their consent are not the same thing and should not be treated as such. As cameras get smaller, this will be easier and easier, voting yes on SB 385 will save the next victims from having to sit through a preliminary hearing, listening to the person who violated them hire an expert witness to testify on their behalf that there is a “moderate to low chance of recidivism” only for him to allegedly reoffend the very next day.

The registry is so very important to me as a member of the community, but even more as a teenage girl. When I entered my freshman year at KU, I soon learned that one of my new friends was also a victim of this kind of crime. Her situation involved a man up skirting her, in her catholic school uniform, at a local QuikTrip. Once I pledged a sorority and moved into the chapter facility, my across the hall roommate learned that her trusted, male, high-school choir teacher had allegedly filmed her and her classmates while changing in his office. This kind of thing unfortunately, is not rare, and it is my hope that as parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, for you to think about your loved ones and how you would want their case to be handled. I want to be able to trust that people who commit this type of crime are registered to keep our community safe.