

**Written Testimony before the
House Select Investigating Committee
Representative John Barker, Chairman**

January 22, 2021

By Heather Sprague Scanlon

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Select Investigating Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the matter of Representative Coleman and the complaint filed against him by Kansas House Democratic Leadership.

Mr. Coleman has exhibited, and continues to exhibit, a clear and established pattern of disturbing behavior. He has threatened and executed several counts of abuse toward women. His actions – past and present – must not be tolerated or excused.

There is a long list of offenses he has committed, leaving each woman traumatized, broken, and fearful. His victims now see the person who stalked, choked, hit, verbally and physically abused, sexually extorted, and terrorized them rewarded with no consequences, but elected to office as a Kansas House Representative. I know some of these women. I have seen firsthand their fear, their suffering, and the damage that he has caused to so many lives.

During the 2020 election cycle, I spoke with Mr. Coleman many times. I can assure you that this man feels no remorse, no regret for his actions. In fact, he revels in them, because they place him in the spotlight and in the press. He has said several disturbing things to me in our conversations which led me to repulsion and fearful of what he would, and most certainly will, do next. When the official Kansas House Democratic Twitter page put out a post condemning him, he immediately called me and launched into a raging diatribe, threatening to “kick Tom Sawyer’s ass,” among other threats.

This was the ranting of a person without the capability of self-control. It occurred on more than one occasion. I ceased all communication with Mr. Coleman. When he won his November election, I received a text from him, which essentially read that I must apologize or else, and which I interpreted as threatening language. I did not respond. But this is not my story, and I did not experience a fraction of the terror and agony this man is capable of inflicting. I only know that I believe each of his victims, and that I stand with them.

Mr. Coleman is a dangerous and manipulative individual that is unfit to serve in a position of power such as he is. This position has only increased his boldness and pride. Not only is he a threat to every woman that enters this building, he is a dark stain on the Kansas Legislature and every elected official who does not condemn him nor discipline him. This committee has an opportunity here today to undo some of the anguish he has caused, to show Kansans decisively that it will not tolerate this behavior, and to finally show Mr. Coleman that actions do indeed have consequences.

Elected officials must be held to a higher standard and accountable for their actions. I urge you, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, to vote to expel or, at the very least, censure Mr. Coleman. Please show his victims and women across Kansas that there is no tolerance for this type of behavior, and that it will no longer darken the halls of the People's House.

Thank you for your time.