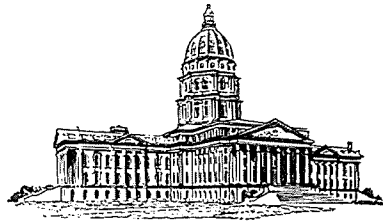


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SENATOR USHA REDDI  
22ND DISTRICT

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 317  
March 22, 2023

Honorable Chair Warren and members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for holding a hearing on SB317 which modifies the statute of limitations on child sex abuse. I stand before you today as a Kansas State Senator, a past president of Rotary Club of Community Action Against Human Trafficking, and a survivor of child sex abuse.

As legislators we have a duty to protect children against predators. Child sex abuse is a very uncomfortable and sensitive topic about which to speak, but SB317 extends to us a unique opportunity to face something that is horrifying and traumatizing for children and the adults they become and provide an option for accountability and renewed hope in the system. Extending the statute of limitations removes the possibility of immunity for predators. Most predators have more than one victim, often many over several years, and they are confident that they will never be held accountable. We have a chance to do our part to change that.

I had the privilege of being president of the Rotary Club of Community Action Against Human Trafficking last year. The Rotary Club is a cause club with a focus on human trafficking. We work with many non-profits across the district, receive grants to help set up crisis centers, assist incarcerated victims of human trafficking move forward to survive, thrive, and build better lives. Most victims of human trafficking have been coerced into the business or child pornography and were typically groomed by trusted individuals in their life. By the time they have the courage, strength, and the resources to come forward against their predators, the statute of limitations has expired.

Now, let me share my own life experience as a survivor of childhood sex abuse. From the ages of 10 to 16, from 1975 to 1981, I endured sexual abuse in my home by my own dad, an upstanding physician, a big donor to temples and schools, a father of three, and a man of perceived integrity in the community in the United States and in India. By the time I pursued justice I was 54 years old. Until then, I had learned to live life, putting all of this behind me, yet I knew it was still there. I wanted a normal life. I told my children my story, and they gave me the strength and encourage to seek justice. It wasn't okay to look away from a crime. I couldn't be a bystander in my own life. Since the abuse occurred in Virginia, which has no statute of limitations, I was able to seek justice in Virginia. During that process my mother stopped talking

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Attachment: 2

to me and still doesn't talk to me. I am non-existent to my family in India because they see my father as the victim since he is an old man now. But I have never felt stronger in all my life.

Not all sex abuse victims are going to follow the same path to healing and peace, but they should not face barriers as they find their way forward. They should have options available to seek justice, and predators should not have immunity, no matter how much time has passed, from their horrific crimes.

Usha Reddy