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BILL: SB 317

PROPONENT

Thursday March 23rd, 2023

Oral Testimony Via WebX

Thank you for finally giving me the opportunity to testify.

My name is Cecelia Simon, I am a Kansas childhood sexual abuse Group home Survivor. A system kid, adopted to parents that worked and lived as house parents for a Kansas non-profit private group home where I was illegally forced to live with older violent male juvenile delinquent predators. My childhood years I learned to endure mental, emotional and physical torture. I was threatened, raped orally, vaginally, and sodomized by the predators in this group home where I lived as a little girl, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

At the early age of six I began running away. Every time I ran away the police kept bringing me back.

It was against the law to have a young child living in this high level group-home with the opposite sex. Social workers, psychologist, Doctors, professionals of every institution licensed these homes, did walk throughs, did the paperwork knowing for years of my living situation.

I was a Catholic school voucher kid that witnessed one of the worst Kansas sexual predator priests. In this school I was a whistleblower and they used their power to demonize a poor abused system kid. When I tried telling them the priest was giving the altar boys alcohol they set out their campaign to silence me. The Catholic Church

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convinced others that I was a problem child, sending me to their catholic psychiatrists and targeting me in school labeling me a "bad kid".

Later on through the years when I acted out, the school, along with my adopted parents, threatened to send me to an all girls catholic boarding school. Several of my peers from this Catholic school took their own lives due to the sexual abuse from this priest and the cruelty from the adults covering up the abuse.

Every institution in Newton, Kansas, where I was raised followed their lead. They labeled me a liar, a sinner, a whore, and white-trash. They failed protecting a little girl who was being raped, tortured, and abused.

My adopted mother, who had untreated mental illness, often threatened to kill me or herself. She gave out physical punishment and locked me in a storage closet for hours without food, water, or a toilet. I was told by my adopted mother if there was a gun in the house she would blow my head off, she should have left me to rot with the trash from where I came from. She had everyone convinced that I was a liar and a "bad kid" that needed locked up.

Over the years as my behavior grew worse the professionals at the group home sent me to their male psychiatrist for therapy at his home. They also sent male admins/social workers to spend time alone with me.

All of these professionals, these institutions ignored their duty to protect a little girl that they took an oath to protect. They were suppose to be the ones kids trust. We tell kids to trust these professionals.

As a little girl, I learned the predators were right, no one was going to help me not even God.

In order to Survive, I repressed my memories until the age of forty-nine. At the age of forty-nine, for the first time in my life I ended up in the hospital on suicide watch. Now at the age of fifty two years old I am still recovering memories and will be in therapy for the rest of my life. There is not enough time today to list all of what Ive lost.

I consider myself one of the lucky ones because kids like me, system kids, we rarely make it out alive.

The institutional sexual abuse of children is a pervasive symptom of indoctrinated power dynamics and relationship structures upon which organizations are built. For institutions with esteemed histories or devoted followings, it becomes all too easy to prioritize upholding that long-cultivated public perception at the cost of a child's well-being. Especially for those that rely on donations, protecting the group's overall reputation becomes more important than ensuring the safety of the children they serve.

As long as there are organizations whose leaders are unaccountable to any earthly authority but their own, those organizations will be sanctuaries for predators of every stripe.

Today I am asking for you to uphold your oath, your duty to protect children. Uncover hidden predators, abolish the Civil SOL/front and back, vote yes to abolish the repose. The Kansas repose is an antiquated construction law meant to govern property. Human beings, children are no ones property. It's not germane and it is unconstitutional. Give the people of Kansas their right to vote this law out and their right to protect their children from hidden sexual predators.

States abolishing their Civil SOL/Repose laws, regardless of time, are sending child predators a clear message:

You will no longer burden our state nor our institutions.

Child predators look for weak infrastructures where they are freely given access to victims. Not abolishing front and back signals these child predators to move to Kansas. As a result we will be here every year with a new harvest of victims until you abolish the 1984 repose and learn about the predators in your institutions. (See cases for repose).

I will never forget the door or the stairs in the basement of the group-home in Kansas. The smell of dirt, mold, and over painted gray stairs with chipped paint. The creaking on the third step down, or the feeling of the cold cement floor, blood, urine, sticky, floor that haunts me daily. I will never forget the sky full of angry eyes, laughing, in that basement. Pinned to the floor in confusion, pain and fear I would hear the creaking of the third step. Looking towards the stairs I will never forget the light from the door fading, I will never forget the sound of the door shutting, the sound of the lock, it goes off in my head like a bomb everyday.

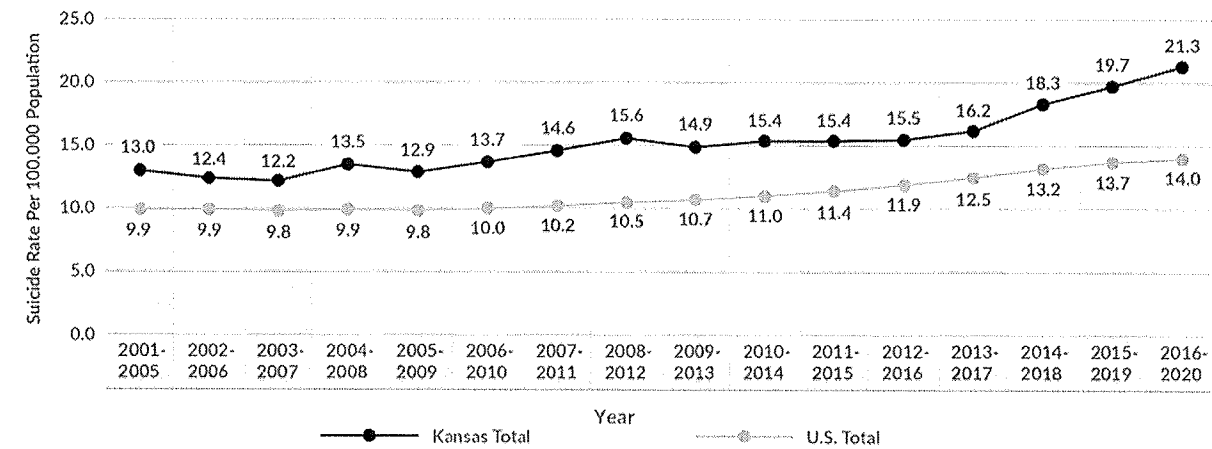
“Why does no one love me, why is this happening, why is no one coming to help me, no one will ever help me.”

Today you have the power to help that little girl out of that basement. Today you have the power to unlock that basement door, the door to justice for all Survivors.

Thank you for your time,
Cecelia Simon

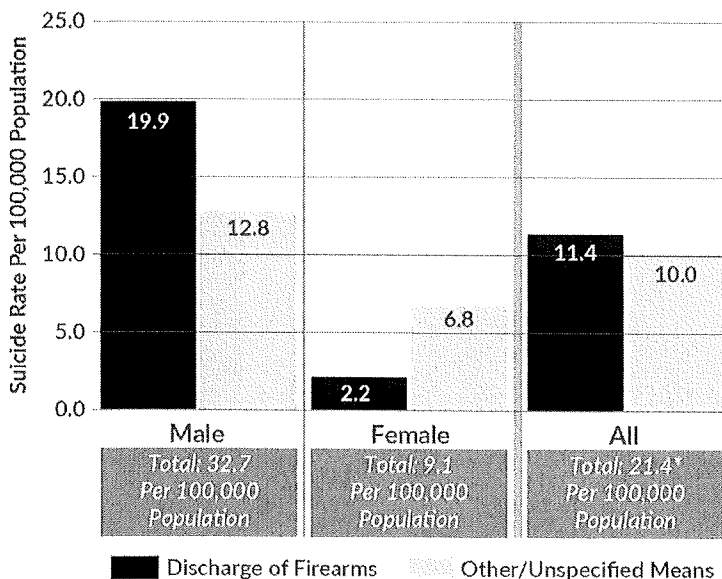
Cases:							
KS	Ripley v. Tolbert, 260 Kan. 491, 504, 921 P.2d 1210, 1219 (1996)	K.S.A. 60-515(a), 60-523	statute of repose, vested rights	Expressly Constitutional	As such, statutes which became effective after a statute of repose had expired could not be applied retroactively and could not revive an action barred by an expired statute of repose without violating due process.	CSA	AB 8/27/20
KS	Harding v. K.C. Wall Products, Inc., 831 P.2d 958, 967-968 (Kan. 1992)	K.S.A. 60-513, 60-3303(e) (revival for asbestos)	Due Process, vested rights	Expressly Constitutional	Claim still barred by 8 year statute of repose.	Non-CSA	AB 8/19/20

Figure 2: Rates of Suicide (Per 100,000) Among Youths Age 15-24 in Kansas and the U.S., 2001-2020



Note: Data were aggregated to five-year periods (e.g., 2016-2020) due to small sample size.
 Source: Kansas Health Institute analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality 1999-2020 on CDC WONDER Online Database, 2001-2020, and Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Office of Vital Statistics, Death Database, 2001-2020.

Figure 3: Means of Suicide Among Male and Female Youths Age 15-24 in Kansas, 2016-2020



Note: Data were aggregated to a five-year period (e.g., 2016-2020) due to small sample sizes. *The difference in total rate (21.4 per 100,00 compared to 21.3 per 100,000) is due to rounding.
 Source: Kansas Health Institute analysis of Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Office of Vital Statistics, Death Database, 2001-2020.

CAREGIVER RISK FACTORS FOR CHILD MALTREATMENT

1 Drug Abuse
 IN 41 REPORTING STATES: **121,215** VICTIMS (**26.4%**) HAVE THE DRUG ABUSE CAREGIVER RISK FACTOR

2 Domestic Violence
 IN 37 REPORTING STATES: **125,538** VICTIMS (**28.7%**) HAVE THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CAREGIVER FACTOR

3 Public Assistance
 IN 37 REPORTING STATES: **83,897** VICTIMS (**23.5%**) HAVE THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE CAREGIVER RISK FACTOR

*THE NATIONAL PERCENTAGES ARE BASED ON # OF VICTIMS IN STATES REPORTING FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL FACTOR

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES