

HB2536.Cadence Dobias.2-8-22.Pro

Cadence

First and foremost, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I hope that in hearing my story I can help in building the collective narrative on the importance of HB 2536 and why myself and fellow Risers are here today.

When I first transferred from community college to university I was in awe of everything in front of me. I jumped into everything I could from social justice clubs to research work. Yet, even with these opportunities and everything ahead of me, in September of 2021 I was raped.

In a new place without the comfort of what I was used to I was scared, without support, and was left looking for resources. I went to a resource center where I was asked about what I wore, if I knew the perpetrator, and about the experience itself. I relived every moment only to be told there was nothing that could be done and given a list of rights I had so muddled with legal jargon that I didn't even know what any of it said. I did know what it meant though - that there was no justice for me there. Afterwards I was left watching my story become another file number being tossed aside to be torn up. As I left I went down the resource number list calling each one only to be met with the same exact response. "The number you are attempting to reach is no longer in service." At no point in my life had I felt so alone, so overwhelmed, and such like I had somehow failed.

The passage of HB 2536 will take file numbers and give survivors their names back. The foundation of this bill allows for survivors' needs to be met, their justice enacted, and their resources implemented. I know what it is like to be just a number, and I know that every Kansas survivor deserves to have their name known, story heard, and justice enacted.