

## SB 416 Testimony - TOnia Avery

My name is T'Onia Avery. I have the fortune of not having to grow up in the system. But I have the misfortune of having a run in with the system after I was 18. My case itself was fairly small, but not so simple. I was on probation for a year but I had the constant threat of "failing probation" which is an automatic jail time of 180 days (6 months). As a young person with a new child it was extremely hard for me, and although I persevered I still to this day 3 years later have this case looming over my head.

Please put yourself into the mindset of a young person or even an older adult with a child facing charges, the fines and fees imposed on the youth is nothing but another stumbling block. I fell behind on all of my payments and once payments are classified as outstanding, you could find yourself failing probation and back in jail. Imagine being a parent of multiple kids, trying to make a way for your family and having fees after fees after fees hit you. For treatments, and UA's etc.

For me it was "am I going to pay my utility or pay my fees?" For a child to have to face this and they aren't even old enough for a real job it's inhumane. Especially when punishments are already consistently being passed out. No youth should have to deal with that hardship, our future youth deserve better, they deserve some sort of leniency. Please get rid the fines and fees, it can truly make a huge difference.