

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2350

Submitted to the House Human Services and Housing Committee

By Kerry Naughton, Crime Survivors Program Director, Partnership for Safety and Justice

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Chair Tomei and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kerry Naughton and I am the Director of the Crime Survivors Program at Partnership for Safety and Justice. Partnership for Safety and Justice is a 13-year old statewide membership organization that advocates for smart public safety policy, which to us means working with everyone most impacted by crime and violence: victims and survivors of crime, people convicted of crime, and system stakeholders. We think this gives us a critical and comprehensive perspective on needed changes to build safe, healthy communities.

I submit this testimony on behalf of Partnership for Safety and Justice in support of the Healthy Teen Relationship Act (HB 2350), which is an important next step in developing a comprehensive plan to better prevent and respond to teen dating violence in Oregon.

Before joining Partnership for Safety and Justice, I spent almost a decade as a victim advocate in Washington, DC, working on national victim assistance and victim rights projects. My first job was at the National Center for Victims of Crime, where I helped develop the first national program dedicated to helping youth who are victimized by crime. Although we helped youth who were harmed by any type of violent or non-violent crime, a large part of our focus was on teen dating violence because of the prevalence - it is tragically common. Consider these facts:

- One in three adolescents in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner—a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence.¹
- One in 10 high school students has been purposefully hit, slapped or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend.²
- A study of adult victims of rape, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner found that 22% of women and 15% of men first experienced some form of partner violence when they were between 11 and 17 years old.³
- Teens who are victims are more likely to be depressed and do poorly in school; may engage in unhealthy behaviors, like alcohol and drug use; and, are at higher risk for victimization during college.⁴

The national data has been instrumental in developing strategies that promote healthy relationships, prevent patterns of dating violence that can last into adulthood, and help victims and survivors of dating violence find safety and rebuild their lives. HB 2350 provides the

¹ Break the Cycle. *Dating Abuse Statistics*. www.loveisrespect.org

² Ibid.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Understanding Teen Dating Violence 2012*. www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention

⁴ Ibid.

structure to give Oregon the data we need to ensure that our policies and practices can best prevent and respond to teen dating violence.

Thank you for your continued attention to the far-reaching issue of teen dating violence in Oregon and for your efforts to improve Oregon's response to survivors. The Healthy Teen Relationship Act is a smart policy to better enable communities to meet teen dating violence survivors' needs. Partnership for Safety and Justice urges you to support HB 2350.