

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2779

Submitted to the House Judiciary Committee

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

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Chair Barker 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 14-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 Sexual Assault Protection Order (HB 2779), which is an important mechanism to keep sexual assault survivors in Oregon safe.

HB 2779 would create a civil protection order for survivors of sexual assault who are currently ineligible for protection. Oregon has effective tools to provide protection orders for survivors of domestic violence and stalking. But current law fails to provide similar civil protection for people who are sexually assaulted by an acquaintance or stranger and want to increase their safety, but have not chosen to report the crime. The Sexual Assault Protection Order (SAPO) would bridge this troubling gap in existing safety mechanisms.

Sexual violence is a serious public safety and public health issue in Oregon, as it is throughout the rest of the country. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that one in 5 women and one in 71 men in the United States have been raped at some point in their lives.¹ The study estimated that 409,000 Oregonians have been raped—representing one of the highest rates of lifetime prevalence of rape amongst the 50 states.² The vast majority of victims were raped by someone they knew: about 50% of victims were raped by a current or former intimate partner; 40% were raped by an acquaintance.³ Research suggests that only one in six rapes is reported to law enforcement.⁴

Before joining Partnership for Safety and Justice, I spent almost a decade as a victim advocate in Washington, DC, working on national victims' assistance and victims' rights projects. One of these positions was at the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), which operates the national sexual assault hotline. Part of my job was spent assisting survivors around the country who were unable to

¹ Black, M.C., et al (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Kilpatrick, D.G. and Ruggiero, K.J. (2003). *Rape in Oregon: A Report to the State*. Charleston, SC: National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center, Medical University of South Carolina.

access assistance in their local communities. The primary challenge I heard was that local services were not funded well enough to meet the need in the community. Another challenge that sexual assault survivors often voiced was that they had no safety options outside of involvement in the criminal justice system.

Since my time at RAINN, 19 states now provide a civil protection order for victims of sexual assault. Partnership for Safety and Justice encourages Oregon to pass HB 2779 and become the next state to provide this important safety option for survivors of sexual assault.