

February 8, 2015

TO: Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Christina Gordon

RE: SB 188 Support

Personal Testimony

Chair Prozansk, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Christina Gordon, and I am a victim of the theft of an intimate image and the sharing of that image without my consent.

I am here in support of Senate Bill 188. My experience does not fit exactly in the body of the bill, but it is my story and one that is necessary to begin this conversation about the impacts that sharing a private and intimate image without a person's consent can have on their lives. I support the basic concept of this bill as it recognizes the people should not be punished for taking pictures of their own body for any reason.

On August 9th, 2013, I had arrived to my place of employment and had found out that a supervisor of mine had been fired that day. Shortly after my shift started, I was asked to speak to my regional manager in the office privately. I was informed why my supervisor had been fired. It had been discovered that the supervisor had a computer file with about 100 intimate photos of past and present female employees.

He had shared this file on another employee's laptop after repairing it for them. The employee who found these on their laptop immediately went above the supervisor's chain of command to report the file. Upon a discussion between the regional manager and the supervisor, the supervisor admitted to stealing these images off of women's cellphones and laptops without their consent and sharing them.

I was informed that I was in the office because my own image was within this file. I had never shared an image, but did have one on my iPhone that the supervisor had hacked. I was in shock after hearing this news. At first, the only thing I could do was try to act calm, engage in conversation, while my heart felt as though it was beating out of my chest. It was after I left the office that I completely broke down and had to excuse myself from the rest of my shift. The news of why the supervisor was fired and that I was one of the victims spread quickly throughout the workplace.

I was humiliated. I had only lasted there a few more weeks before I had to leave because I felt violated and embarrassed. Only one other woman and my self were informed that our images had been hacked. There are many more victims who were never notified. I went to the police and requested an investigation, but there was nothing they could do, for what the supervisor had done is not a crime in Oregon. It felt like a crime.

My privacy and safety was stolen from me. This violation has been at the root of many panic attacks and depression. It has been nearly two years since this took place, and it still affects me. It has affected me in nearly every area of my life.

Hundreds if not thousands of people, mostly women, in Oregon fall victims to these violations of privacy and are humiliated. Especially when their image is shared on websites designed to exploit, demean, and wreck their lives.

I am fortunate to have not had my intimate photo shared on a website with my personal information like thousands of women in the United States, although it doesn't make me any less of a victim. It is embarrassing and terrifying for people to share their stories, just as I am embarrassed and terrified right now. I cannot allow for victims of these violations to feel that they don't have options, or to not be heard. I speak up for them and myself today. I will not sit idly by as women become reduced to feeling like trading cards, or having their own bodies used against them.

Victims of this violation often feel shamed and blamed for taking the photo in the first place. However, we should not feel ashamed for this. We are not to be blamed when someone wreaks havoc on our lives. More and more this is happening, and the law needs to reflect the changes in technology that allows for these violations to occur. Take for instance the occurrence of a dozen or more celebrities that had their accounts hacked and their intimate images disseminated.

I urge the committee to vote to have Senate Bill 188 move to the floor for vote. You can be the beginning of providing protection, resources, and justice to victims of what should be crimes. This is the start of the conversation that can make change in Oregon for these victims.

I did not receive any justice in my case. The way we can make this justice happen for me will be to start the process of passing Senate Bill 188.

Thank you,

Christina Gordon