

CRIME VICTIMS UNITED

P.O. Box 1896, Lake Oswego, OR 97035 • www.crimevictimsunited.org • contact@crimevictimsunited.org • 503-502-7572

TO: The Oregon State Senate
FROM: Danielle Tudor, Rape Survivor/Activist
DATE: June 4, 2015
RE: HB2317 extending Oregon's statute of limitations re: four first-degree sex crimes

From the Desk of
Senator Thatcher

*Nationwide, only three percent of rapists ever serve a day in prison. Compare that to the statistic that says every two minutes in the U.S., a child/woman over the age of twelve is raped (RAINN).

*For far too long, rape victims have had little or no hope of achieving justice in Oregon. House Bill 2317 in its original form asking for a 20-year SoL on rape was a start towards change that is long overdue. This bill would ensure that more rapists can be prosecuted and allow for the words "justice" and "healing" to become a reality for more victims of rape.

*Oregon's current SoL is one of the very shortest in the country. More than half of all other states have no SoL at all, or SoLs that are far longer than Oregon's (20-25 years).

*The national trend in other state legislatures recently has been to extend their SoL. Four states have done so. Nevada, which had the nation's shortest SoL—only four years—just signed 20 years into law.

*House Bill 2317 was intended to be a moderate bill, with a 20 year SoL applicable only to Rape 1, Sodomy 1, Unlawful Penetration with a Foreign Object, and Sex Abuse 1.

Since I was born and raised In Oregon, I always have wanted to believe that my state would do the right thing for those who have had their lives forever altered by a heinous crime, namely: victims of rape. When I was raped at age 17, my future was changed forever. Being raped is like living through your own violent murder. But you don't die. Instead, you are left to suffer through the consequences of having been raped for the rest of your life. You become the one who suffers for what was done to you -- not your rapist, because all too often, he won't serve a day in prison. Your spirit and your will can be destroyed. All too often, a short SoL has locked victims out of receiving justice. Victims like me, who did everything right by reporting their rape.

There have been several victims who have shared their stories publicly in support of House Bill 2317 and a SoL of 20 years. Enough time has passed so that we can speak publicly and articulate the lifelong challenges that a rape victim endures. We have been transparent, giving you details and a glimpse into our lives, letting you see the pain with which we live. And we all have one thing in common: the SoL failed each of us. Please understand that the pain of reliving your rape before an audience over and over again begins to take its toll. I respectfully ask this Senate not to require us to come back in eight months to begin this process all over again.

As I have walked the halls of the Senate and met personally with almost every single one of you, I have felt proud of my state and its representation. It didn't matter what political party you belonged to; I found that most of you agreed with me. A 20-year SoL is what is best for Oregon this year. So I now ask you for one thing: please, either amend HB 2317 to a 20-year SoL, or, as SB 8 is pulled to the floor for a vote, please vote yes on this bi-partisan bill.

"To promote a balanced criminal justice system through public awareness and legislative action"