

Submitter: Alethea Barlowe
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB586

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Alethea Barlowe, Klamath/Modoc Tribal member and survivor of Arnie Lee Eggsman. He was the father to our three children. I started my life sentence on September 17, 2017. Arnie was murdered on the street in our hometown of Chiloquin, Oregon. He was killed 4 days before our oldest daughter's 8th birthday and just 34 days after the birth of our youngest child.

The events surrounding his death involved many people in our community and at the time, one of the things I really needed and wanted to know is "what happened?".

When I arrived at the bridge, the only route through our small town, which was closed. I wasn't greeted with anything. I was barely acknowledged, I was told I should go home. I couldn't leave the father of my children laying on that bridge alone in the dark. Due to how the legal process plays out offenders are not allowed to speak with survivors and are encouraged to plead not guilty if they plan to fight the charges or go to trial. The justice system thrives on creating separation between the family, the offenders, and the system. My family was failed by the justice system again and again. I felt like I was on trial and was the only one that "lost". The only direct communication from the two men who were convicted of his murder, were meaningless general statements. My oldest daughter can't accept their words.

Beyond the continued heartache and disappointment with all systems we live within, I also have to navigate lifetime grief processes with my children. I have to worry about our safety as I was contacted by a family member of our offender, and "deal with" hearing that the offenders are bragging that they "got away with murder".

I support this bill because any effort at offering victims and survivors something more meaningful than what the traditional court system offers is important. Since Arnie's death I have participated in a surrogate circle and with the RJ group of mentors in the ODOC in the hope that we can change the community norm within the walls of the prison since I know that it'll be much harder to change all of the other systems.

Providing a way for my family and others to get answers to our questions early without legal retribution would have allowed our family to begin the process of healing much sooner, as it is it took four years in the courts before anything was complete and we have been able to move towards closure.

Please grant victims and survivors the protection of a confidential process in which offenders can take responsibility for what they have done directly to victims/survivors allowing us to begin the long work of healing sooner rather than later.

Thank you.