

Submitter: Sharon Wood Wortman  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: SB1070

I was born on Christmas Day 1944, the child of a rape that took place in March 1944. My 17-year-old chaste mother was attacked while a junior in high school. When she discovered she was pregnant, my maternal grandfather forced her to marry her rapist, a 6-foot-tall, 180-pound, 18-year-old whiskey drinker. My father died at age 32, not a year too soon. The ten years I spent off and on in my so-called parents' care was a non-stop nightmare. The same for my younger sister, born premature. We are the only survivors of our parents' ten years together. Pre-Pill, at least three of our would-be siblings were kicked by my father while still in our mother's stomach and didn't make it out of our mother alive. My home life was one big generational mishmash of nonstop DV. When I wasn't surviving with my parents, I was surviving with my grandparents. My grandfather knocked my grandmother around for 30 years after they met in 1926 (my mother was born in 1927). My grandfather was a big man, 230 pounds, 6-foot-two. My grandmother was 4-foot-11. My mother was 5-foot-8 and thermometer thin. The women didn't stand a chance against these perpetrators, nor their children. Neither did my aunts, my mother's two younger sisters. I know about domestic violence and I've seen firsthand why women don't leave. For my grandmother and my mother, undereducated and low on the totem pole of self-esteem, they had no other resources for economic survival in a capitalist and patriarchal system. Enmeshed from birth in the nightmare of DV, I followed in my role models' footsteps for far too long. Free now of abusers and living an entirely different life, I urge understanding that survivors of domestic violence, no matter what their criminal status, are in need of support and care. Please.