

FINAL 2/2/2026 SB1550 TESTIMONY

Good afternoon. My name is Shelly Stager, and this is my husband, Bob. We want to thank you for the opportunity to speak today about the importance of passing the Hidden Homicides Bill.

Our daughter, Kaittie, was only 26 when she died under suspicious circumstances in October of 2020. She was our youngest of three daughters. Kaittie was kind, loving, and deeply connected to her family and a close group of friends. After high school, she attended the Aveda Institute of Cosmetology in Portland and was enjoying the rewards of her hard work. Losing Kaittie has completely devastated our family. She was an incredibly beautiful person with a bright future. She is loved and missed tremendously.

Kaittie knew her abuser for only twelve and a half months. The abuse escalated quickly into violence and control. The abuse was documented, and her abuser has a long history of domestic violence. At the time of Kaittie's death, **he was on probation for prior abuse—and he remains on probation today with an active warrant.**

The Hidden Homicides Bill is intended to trigger an investigation into deaths that occur under circumstances involving domestic violence. The law identifies ten factors to consider, and a death only needs to meet three of those ten factors to qualify as a potential hidden homicide. **Kaittie's death met all ten factors.**

The Hidden Homicides law will also require training. We know firsthand that training saves lives and changes outcomes. We became acquainted with Alliance for Hope International through one of Kaittie's closest friends, who had lived in Idaho and has a friend who is a police officer working there. Alliance for Hope International conducted a training for officers, and during that training, the officer recognized that Kaittie's case met the criteria for a hidden homicide. She shared Kaittie's story with Gael Strack as a result of that training. We are deeply grateful for the work Alliance for Hope International is doing for victims and their families.

This law is crucial for protecting future victims of domestic violence and for families who are seeking truth and justice after unimaginable loss. It is our hope that with your support in passing this important bill, deaths connected to domestic violence will trigger a transparent and thorough investigation—so families are not left with unanswered questions and silence and that their loved one's case was taken seriously.

We speak today in loving memory of our daughter, Kaittie Renaye Stager, and in honor of so many others lost to domestic violence.

Thank you again for your time and consideration in passing this vital law.