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HB233/SB212 – Criminal Law – Assault in the First Degree – Suffocation or Strangulation

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Support

Good afternoon Mr. Chair and Honorable Members of the Judiciary and Judicial Proceedings Committee. For the record, I am Besen Sanga. I am testifying in support of HB233/SB212 Criminal Law – Assault in the First Degree – Suffocation or Strangulation. This bill will make the intentional suffocation or strangulation a 1st Degree Assault.

Strangulation is not only a significant predictor for future lethal violence but it one of the most lethal form of domestic violence. Only a few minutes time, can determine whether one loses consciousness or death. It is also one of the most readily available methods of causing severe harm because you do not need a lot of equipment to perform the act. Almost any item can be used. In some cases, there are individuals powerful enough to use their bare hands.

If the victim is fortunate to live though the ordeal, they are still eminent threats that the person will face. Physically, there are complications that occur when someone experience strangulation (especially if done multiple times) e.g. respiratory complications, increase risk of blood clots traveling to the brain. Even death can occur days to weeks after the attack due major tear in the carotid artery. There is also the increase risked that the attack will happen again and it may lead to their demise or other serious complications.

Physiologically, the personal may suffer from PTSD, depression, suicide, anxiety and a host of other issues.

I have 1st and 2nd degree relatives, who are survivors of domestic violence. I have seen the aftermath of what lingers around long after they have gotten away from their abuser.

While, I do feel that we have made great strides in providing protection for survivors and harsher punishment for those who commit the act, there is still room for improvement.

Therefore, I strongly urge you, the Committee's to report in favor of HB233/SB212 Criminal Law – Assault in the First Degree – Suffocation or Strangulation.

Besen Sanga