

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 134:**  
**CIVIL ACTIONS – CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE – DEFINITION AND STATUTE OF**  
**LIMITATIONS**  
**\*\*SUPPORT\*\***

**TO: Hon. Chairman William C. Smith, Hon. Vice Chair Jeff Waldstreicher, Senate  
Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**FROM: Jena Cochrane**

**DATE: 02/02/2021**

“I’m a 49 years old incest survivor who was thrown-out by my Mom when I was 13 years old. My great sin was speaking out against my stepfather who I sent to prison after he raped me in 1984. I still pay the price for not keeping quiet to this day. The price for voicing my truth is I never get to go home for Christmas and Thanksgiving ever again. My family still blames me for tearing the family apart. Other victims and survivors don’t speak out because they don’t want this same fate.”—Jenipher Jenice Kollar

I am 49 years old and I want you to know that the invisible scars of child sexual assault never go away. I have paid a very- **very** high price with my family for speaking out. I have forfeited the right to be in that family. Most victims know they will have blowback from coming forward; that is why they don’t until later in life--if at all. But when they do, they deserve to be heard. SB134 & HB263 helps victims with this.

I was 12 years old when I was first sexually assaulted by my step-farther. **This is sobering, because it is the same age my daughter was last year.** Being molested and raped happened after my stepfather found out that I got my period. For the entire year, Steve (My stepfather who I loved and adored) molested me and ultimately raped me while my mother was pregnant with my brother Stevie.

**I am writing this testimony for my daughter. Because she deserves to live in a world where there is no statute-of-limitation for child sexual assault. There should be some way to hold perpetrators accountable for their crime even if its civilly.**

**I look at my daughter and I see everything I lost. I see her innocents and her love for life.** My stepfather Steve Dwyer took all of that from me when he slipped

downstairs in the middle of the night to kiss me with his breath stinking of beer and fondled my breast. The problem with child sexual assault is that there are no visible scars, and no one wants these stories to be true. But trust me the scars are there forever. My brother who was in the same room when I was being molested just went through shock therapy last year trying to forget what happened in that basement—he is not the same and his sanity is fragile. We all suffer when we keep the secrets of predators like this.

The reason I told people so early about my sexual assault (and had my day in court) was because of domestic violence. My stepfather was also beating my mother. In fact, He beat her so bad on Christmas Eve 1985 that the police responding to the call said she was the worst battered women they had ever seen. Steve Dwyer broke both of her arms and shattered her jaw. This was my catalyst for coming forward. I wanted to protect her. If this had not happened, I never would have told at such an early age and had my day in court.

Even so, I am still paying the exceedingly high price for speaking out. My mother still does not believe me to this day—even though I sent my stepfather to prison—and he was convicted.

She still thinks he was an innocent man or wants to keep that illusion for the sake of the family. It's because of my mother that my family is still fractured. My Mom wants to maintain the status quo. She wants to pretend that her husband never took my virginity. She *was* and *still is* my stepfather's biggest supporter.

Today, my Mom wants to only have a relationship with me if "we" agree to be silent and never talk about the past and embrace a prettier version of it. She has gotten everyone around her to agree to this. To this day, my younger sister Jessie does not know what my stepfather did—although I wonder if she suspects. It is just not talked about. She is an innocent just like me. But we both deserve to live in a world where the truth is known and I can go home for Christmas and Thanksgiving too. Because the way things are. I don't get to go home. I will never get to go home and that is an extremely high price to pay for the rest of your life.

You often wonder why victims do not come forward until later in life. It is because they do not want to be me; The price is too high.

Each of the victims who have testified on SB134 & HB263 have paid a huge price to bring you their testimony. I personally sank into horrible depression after

testifying in person last year in front of the House of Representatives and my nightmares came back along with my PTSD. This threatened my marriage and the great life I have so desperately tried to create for my children. Therefore, I have chosen to testify via a written statement instead. So, I hope you will take the time to listen to my story and all those who have tried to be brave for you. We are real people. Society will not crumble if we pass HB 263 & SB134. I am sure there is a way to make things equitable—but the voices of the past should be heard. **For this reason, I urge a favorable committee report and passage of Senate Bill 134.**