

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 686
Civil Actions – Child Sexual Abuse – Definition, Damages, and Statute of Limitations
(The Child Victims Act of 2023)
****SUPPORT****

TO: Hon. William C. Smith, Jr. Chair, and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Judy Lorenz

DATE: February 23, 2023

My name is Judy Lorenz and my spouse is a survivor of child sex abuse. I am a Family Support Leader with SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests).

Here are my testimonies from past years. I recently stared at my computer and keyboard wondering: What can I say this year to make a difference? I couldn't think of a thing. So, this year, I'm giving you highlights from all of these. Because I realize it's up to *you* to make the difference.

2015

My husband *tried* to tell me of his abuse before we got married. His attempt was convoluted which often happens when survivors first tell their story. From the little bit he was able to share, my horrified reaction shut him down. Ten years later he was forced to tell me, as his perp was publicly accused.

2016

I come here again imploring this body to vote yes. I begged Chairman Velario to stop stuffing the drawer and allow a vote to happen. I shared with a shaky voice the

reasons why victims cannot come forward with their stories, until much later in life - if at all. I sat with stomach churning and blood pressure rising, as the opposition made up stories about how harmful this legislation will be; So, I ask - what are you going to do about it? I hope with all of my heart that I will not have to testify again next year.

2019

Survivors have been in this chamber for decades seeking this type of legislation. We need a look back window so past victims can finally be heard. This law will not guarantee all survivors a big cash reward; just the *opportunity* to be heard and *perhaps receive* just compensation, *if* a judge or jury deems it appropriate. *Give* them that chance.

2020

I am here to say **ENOUGH!**

2021

This last one I submitted on behalf of survivors due to covid rules. It starts with a survivor quote: "He then put a gun to my head and pulled the trigger"... I quoted 15 more survivors and ended with this one: "And then, *I* am blamed for not speaking out earlier".

2023

See the pattern? You were voted in to make a difference. Please vote yes to SB686 this year. Make 2023 my last appearance.