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Victim Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 758

Hello,

First and foremost, thank you for allowing me to share my story. My name is Kailah Caliskan. I was a victim of sexual assault on Christmas Eve in 2019 at the age of 17. I, along with a male I was with at the time, we will call him "C", had been talking about hanging out with my friend and her boyfriend. A few other friends were there, and the night went along as any teenager's hangout would. I was drinking wine and had used some recreational marijuana. I had also taken my sleeping medication.

One of the friends, whom I'll call "R", was asleep on the couch. As the night went on, "C" and I went to a room and proceeded to have consensual sex. After a few minutes, he left the room. The room was pitch black with only the hallway light on. At this point, I was asleep but woke up to the door opening again a few minutes later. I felt a naked body lay on top of me. Thinking it was male "C", I then proceeded to get under the covers and have sex. What I did not know was that the naked body was not "C," it was "R". A boy I had never met. A boy I had not ever spoken with, let alone permitted him or given him any indication that I wanted to have sex. (which we did, full penis penetration). Something didn't seem right to me so I reached for my cell phone and as he fought me to use the flashlight saying "no,no,no,no".

I shined the flashlight and began frantically screaming. He rushed out of bed and ran out of the door. I scrambled to get any clothes I could, which ended up being "R's" sweatshirt. I had to wear her rapist's sweatshirt as I drove from Middletown MD, approximately 18.8 miles to Hagerstown, MD. I was terrified and had to drive under the influence to get out of the situation. I arrived at my sister's house and crawled into my sister's bed, still wearing her rapist's sweatshirt. I only cared about getting out of that situation, the clothes I was wearing didn't matter until I realized whose sweatshirt I was wearing.

I woke up and my mom and dad were already there in complete confusion. They took me to the hospital, and I had a complete rape kit done. The Police were notified while I was at the hospital.

This incident dissected me physically and mentally and as the investigation continued, interview after interview with the Police, my family was told by a prosecutor at the end of it, there would be no case. I was told, "It is a case of he said she said". My faith in the criminal justice was destroyed.

For the years to follow, I was diagnosed with PTSD. Crippling anxiety and depression overwhelmed my life. I feel failed by the law, the very system that was set in place to protect the people. As time went by, I had to advocate for myself. "C" and "Rs" friends proceeded to post on social media that Kailah was a "whore" and a "snitch", when really, she was a victim of two boys deciding her body was theirs to make decisions with.

My father has taken the hit hardest. He has been a Police Officer for over 25 years. The law is his job, protecting and serving people selflessly for years. The very system that he has protected for 25 years had failed his very own blood. My sister dealt with my screams and crying many nights after. My brother has had to see emotions no 16-year-old ever should. He took the pill bottle away from my mouth multiple times as well. I attempted suicide due to this. I was destroyed by this. I just couldn't believe the words "There's nothing more we can do, it's he said vs she said". I was raped!!

Nobody should scream while scrubbing layers of your epidermis off just to feel "clean" again. This event brings darkness to my family's holiday. Christmas Eve is forever tainted. Please consider passing this law to give justice to the victims of this kind of sexual assault. Would you be okay if a prosecutor looked at your daughter directly in the face and said, no I'm sorry that's not considered rape by the law? Please think about my family and my story in your decision.

I did not let that boy violate my body and nobody should be able to take advantage of someone in such a dark way without consequences.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for hearing my story.