

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

My name is Megan Buell and I am writing in support of HB 3117A to ensure that domestic violence survivors have access to restraining orders to protect their safety. I currently reside in Washington county, Oregon. I am a single mother of a three-year-old boy working three jobs and completing my Master of Arts in Teaching.

I support HB 3117A because I believe it is unreasonable for a survivor of domestic violence to be forced to prove that he or she continues to live in imminent danger of further abuse in order to keep a restraining order in place. My hope for all survivors of domestic violence is that after leaving a domestic violence situation, they no longer experience abuse. A FAPA order should serve as an added protection to the survivors safety plan when there continues to be reasonable fear for one's safety.

When I left my husband, I had a successful safety plan in place. While the FAPA restraining order was granted at the time, it was recently overturned on the grounds that I had not experienced any sexual abuse since leaving our joint residence. While I may not have been at risk for sexual abuse due to living circumstances after leaving, he continued to threaten, intimidate and harass me which made me fear for my physical safety and the physical safety of my son. His harassment and threats ranged from angry text messages and emails, to in-person intimidation and threats during a court ordered mediation session. Furthermore, months earlier he threatened to kill me and take our son if I ever left him. When the restraining order was granted, while the fear remained, I felt protected knowing that my safety plan and the law stood between me and any future abuse from my ex-husband.

I believe that this bill is necessary to ensure that all survivors of abuse should receive the benefit of this protection for their own safety, and the safety of their children. Thank you sincerely for your time and the work that you do. I ask that you join me in support for HB 3117A to protect survivors of abuse and their families.

With gratitude,

Megan Buell