

My name is Tishella I am writing this testimony in support of measure 11. Putting my story out there is important to me in efforts to help anyone else who measure 11 will help. My story begins with my dad sexually abusing me at the age of 9 years old and this continued for 9 years on a regular basis. Through my own experience I will never forget the very first time or last time he sexually abused me it is ingrained into my mind as much as time has passed. Me going through this as a child into my adulthood was extremely challenging knowing that I had to feel this terrible abuse was happening and felt like I could not do anything, or I would lose everything. My dad took my innocence away with no care about how it could affect me long term. He not only took my innocence away at a young age but my voice with his manipulating me into thinking it was my fault not his, and it was only one mistake when he had done it so many times. He forever changed the way I look at people and my trust in others. The problem with thinking like my dad is they think they have done nothing wrong which if they do not get put away are highly likely to find another victim or come after the person. He never felt it was wrong and it was not many mistakes and many like his are the same especially if they are willing to inappropriately touch a child for their own sexual pleasure.

I believe the court did a wonderful job in helping me through every step in the process. They always updated me on everything and answering all questions I had. Anytime I needed them they got right back to me, making sure I was comfortable in knowing I could do this and not to give up. I am grateful for all the encouragement I received leading up to the trial and after. What it meant to me knowing he would be put away for the time he was given gave me piece of mind. With measure 11 it gave me the power and courage to relive my childhood trauma knowing there was a mandatory sentence and a light at the end of the tunnel. Measure 11 also helped save me from worrying that when I went to court, he could possibly get out early or worse be able to just get let go. From my experience being in the courtroom sitting there listening to his sentence gave me so much relief knowing he would not be getting out on parole.

How this would feel to me if these guarantees were not in place would be extremely worrisome, I would fear every day he might try to come find me. Furthermore, it would be scary to know if he did get a sentence there would be any day he could get out on "good behavior" in custody. I would have been on edge all the time. An example would be after he got arrested and put in jail for a month, he got out for 4 days to go wherever. The feeling I had when he got out on bail would have been the same feeling I would have had if he did not get a sentence or could get out at anytime if he did get a sentence. Measure 11 insures you to have the comfort you need to feel secure in your decision to report and go through the whole process of court to put a criminal away.

I believe if this measure is abolished it will impact so many and silence the voices of victims that must already live with the emotional scaring the person did to them. Also, it will have these people worrying if the person will track them down after reporting them, worried about the person doing to someone else the same that was done to them and taking away the security of knowing you will be safe. The people who are victims deserve to have a loud voice and feel empowered, to get rid of this measure who has helped so many like myself is taking their voices that has been silenced as mine was for so many years. If I can help others, I want to give them help to feel safe, supported, and have the security in which is needed.