

When going through the system, our attacker was able to use court proceedings to force us to show up in court over and over. Many times he didn't even show up, but dragged the process on through appeals by providing a wrong mailing address; having a last minute car accident (for which no evidence was ever provided) after being informed by a detective that a detective was waiting at the courthouse to collect a DNA sample; and in the end--after we were forced to appear in court 10 times total--sending his lawyer to drop the appeal because the process would have to start all over in 3 months anyway. All together we had to attend court 10 times over 9 months, forcing us to repeatedly rearrange our schedules, regardless of whether he showed up, and forcing my wife to see that rapist every time he did show up. This also consumed the court's time, and court staff's time, because of hearings the abuser kept forcing or delaying (he was an hour late, hoping to avoid the detective; he refused to provide a sample even though the detective). He manipulated the system to continue abusing my wife, and suffered no consequences for dragging out the process.

This bill is not designed to, nor would it prevent a respondent from contesting a protective order. What this bill would do is: close the loopholes that skilled abusers use to continue to force the Survivors of their attacks to face them repeatedly; close the loopholes that they use to punish Survivors for having the courage to fight them and demand safety in the future.

This bill would mandate that in the event that an appeals process is dropped, a new expiration date be set, so that the possessor of the protective order receive their full year of peace of mind, knowing that they will not have to face someone who has harmed them, or threatened them with harm, and has attempted to further harass and degrade them by the power of attrition, wasting court's time and taxpayer money. Following the cessation of appeals by the respondent, the court would not need to revisit the issue for an entire year, rather than however few months remained from the original order, when the petitioner would be forced to restart the process to maintain protection.

Please vote in favor of this bill to improve conditions for Survivors, prevent frivolous appeals, free up docket space, save taxpayer money, and close a loophole exploited by abusers. Also, please consider making this bill an emergency, because to the Survivor (petitioner) it will always be an emergency, and it will immediately begin freeing up the court's docket. -- Glenn Gutman