

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

My name is Dan Wegh. I am married to Robyn (was Drown), who has been incarcerated in Oregon at Coffee Creek for 15 years and has 5 more to go. We got married 4 years ago, but I knew her when we were kids growing up. We graduated from the same high school. My sisters and her sister were friends. After reconnecting a few years ago, it was obvious that she, as well as other women in similar situations, need changes as described in SB 1070 if justice is to be served.

Robyn's husband, seven years older than her, was sentenced to 29 years. My parents and his parents were friends, so I knew him when I was young, although him being so much older than me meant we did not interact much. But he focused on Robyn starting when she was 15, got her pregnant at 18, and our patriarchal church said she had to marry him. He treated them all like property and threatened her if she tried leaving. Never-the-less, she ran away four times, but each time a minister or judge told her to go back. By the time they had twelve kids, the years of abuse (of every kind) that she received caused her to just put her head down and try to take care of the kids the best she was able.

It's almost inconceivable to me the court decided she was guilty too. She didn't spank the kids with 2x4s or a pipe and was a reluctant spanker when he made her carry out his signature high volume spank counts. Had the sons who turned their dad in known their mother would be caught up in the net, I know they would have handled things differently. By this time, she was just in survival mode, with a six-week-old baby, a toddler, and seven other kids to try to care for. Her fear of him and his belittlement all these years caused her to believe no one could help or do anything for them. When she had a chance recently to talk to the director of the women's shelter that had been near her visiting the prison, the director said teenage boys weren't allowed and that they didn't lock their doors anyway. Situations like this need to be considered in sentencing.

Thank you for considering this bill. I hope for justice's sake it passes.

Sincerely,

Dan Wegh