

February 7, 2024

Re: HB 4146 - Support

Dear Chair Bynum, Vice Chairs Power & Sprenger, and members of the committee:

My name is Nazeedah Khan, I am a sexual assault survivor, and I am the Founder of Restraining Orders Without Borders (ROWB), who is a proud partner and in **strong support** of HB 4146. HB 4146 ensures survivors of sexual/domestic violence have the ability to petition for a restraining order in the jurisdiction of the offense. **Today, Oregon has the opportunity to join 14 states with the most comprehensive restraining order access laws in America.**

Restraining Orders Without Borders is a federal and state campaign ensuring the right to protection for survivors of sexual/domestic violence through legislation. The petition (change.org/protect-survivors) has 46,000 signatures and the campaign has been featured on national and local outlets, including Forbes and ABC. The campaign passed its first law in Hawaii in 2023, has passed the California State Senate thus far in the 2024 legislative cycle, and is working with legislators federally. The campaign is supported by Rise, who authored the federal Sexual Assault Survivors Bill of Rights which passed Congress unanimously in 2016.

Background

As a former state employee working for vulnerable populations, I often told my clients to have faith in our systems, they are made to help. But when I was assaulted during a visit to my hometown, the system abandoned me. **After 4 months of traumatic court hearings following my sexual assault, I was denied a restraining order against the perpetrator from both my state of residence and the state I was assaulted in due to outdated laws regarding interstate offenses.** The state I was assaulted in did not have statutory provisions outlining protections for nonresident victims assaulted by a resident within the state. Today, the evidence I collected while being assaulted sits in a flashdrive in my home because no judge had the jurisdiction to assess the merits of my case. The sexual assault clinic I turned to advised that I wait for my perpetrator to attempt to harm me in order to try again.

Restraining Orders Without Borders

I felt helpless and abandoned by the judicial system. I replayed my court cases again and again. I realized the gap wasn't in my court arguments, it was in the law. **I was not an anomaly – case law and policy research exposed gaps in our nationwide justice system impacting 25 million survivors across America, 1.4 million survivors living in Oregon¹, and 11.9 million Oregon visitors per year², all of whom are vulnerable to Oregon's laws when they visit.** I stopped reliving my hearings and started rewriting the law, passing the Survivor's Protection Act in Hawaii in 2023, and now aiming to give nonresident survivors access to restraining order petitions in California and Oregon.

When our laws protecting survivors are weak, our laws protecting perpetrators are inadvertently strong. When courts are dismissing survivors' cases, it is the perpetrator they rule in favor of. When the survivor is unprotected, it is the perpetrator that is safe. **It is time interstate violence is met with interstate protection by Oregon.** Thank you for your consideration and I strongly urge your aye vote.

Sincerely,
Nazeedah Khan
Founder, Restraining Orders Without Borders
ROWB.National@gmail.com

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>

² <https://www.travelportland.com/about-us/market-research-and-statistics/>