

Submitter:

Tonjie Ophus

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3582

I am writing to offer my personal testimony and support of HB 3582.

I am a victim/survivor of domestic abuse, and now an advocate.

I have been clinically diagnosed with C-PTSD, generalized anxiety, panic disorder, and depression. It has taken many months of psychotherapy to try to even attempt to understand the depths of the abuse that happened to me. My abuser was a retired police officer. How could someone who was sworn to protect and serve do such horrible things to me? Once a Victim can start to understand this (and that timeframe is different for everyone) then comes all the emotions attached with that understanding, confusion, guilt, sadness, anger, no one will believe me because he had a position of power. I did file a police report, and even with another named victim, my case of rape 1, harassment, and causing another to ingest a controlled substance, it was determined, unable to move forward due to lack of evidence. All of this to say.... This all takes time.

Victims that I have encountered, do not feel seen, heard or understood by a system that constantly fails us. Sometimes it could be that we just need to know that we matter which could mean having the courage and ability to follow up civilly and in someway holding the abusers accountable. Otherwise, this gives the abusers freedom to continue to abuse with no consequences.

Many cases go unreported for fear of retaliation, not being believed, and a failing system so why bother. This whole process has been incredibly difficult for me, but I have chosen to turn my pain into power and purpose, hoping to help save a life.

I am urging you to move this bill forward and take a stand with survivors of domestic abuse in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for moving this very important bill forward.

Tonjie Ophus

Domestic abuse advocate, trauma survivor and founder @ You are not alone, trauma survivor

Please see separate victim impact letter