

Good afternoon members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Mary Deenihan Hamel. I am asking that you support the passage of HB 5488.

I survived a horrible experience of domestic violence including but not limited to sexual assault, kidnapping, repeatedly having protective and restraining orders violated and then to just make it all even worse, I survived a divorce, criminal trial and later had my offenders parental rights terminated.

Throughout all these experiences, it has been made very clear to me that my offender has no intention of complying with the court orders that are supposed to protect me. I have to watch my every move and wonder every minute how and when is the end. This is not a very pleasant experience to say the least.

I really do not want to have to get into the specifics today of what happened to me but I will tell you that I was shocked to learn last year that suddenly there was going to be good time credit given to almost the entire offender population and done without regard for the victim at all. I thought when I was at the sentencing hearing that he was going to be incarcerated for the time stated by the judge which was a negotiated plea and the details worked out with the state's attorney, judge, public defender and the offender and the victim. This was also the law at the time of the crime and sentencing.

There have been over 50 people that have had to work on this case that I can count and I am confident that I do not know all that has gone on behind the scenes.

A presentence investigation was done and I was asked to participate. I did what was asked of me throughout. I was told that if I want my thoughts and feelings considered I needed to do this; so I did because it is the right thing to do. I think it is right, proper and honorable to stop someone from hurting others. I also know that I am not the only victim of this person. To say he has a checkered past is a gross understatement and I am not really sure that I even know the full extent of it. He has a long history of violence from what I am aware of and my experience has been that he is not successful outside of the structure of prisons. I may be the victim that your legal system will recognize but, I am not the only one who has suffered the very negative effects of his actions.

I do know a few things...I am alive because I was smart enough to survive this offender. I do know that when someone breaks in your house in the middle of the night and hovers over your face saying, "I told you not to hang up the phone on me bitch" it is startling to the core of your soul. Especially when they drove from New Hampshire to do this and was intoxicated. I do know that is how my last exchange with him started and it only gets worse from there.

I survived him, kept my wits about me and kept myself in one piece so my children still

had a mother. I have heard the undertones of "*well at least your not dead*"well I am not dead.... not because of him. How is it right that I am able to stay alive and in one piece and continue doing what I am supposed to do and you are rewarding this violence. You are rewarding all the violent people for obeying the rules and doing what they are supposed to do. This is shocking and not only to me but to most of the people that I have talked to over the last year.

I do not want to mince words...I am not in favor of giving good time credit to violent offenders. I have sat and have listened to the arguements and have tried to keep an open mind and I do see where it is good and I also see the fatal flaws. I see Bill 5488 as a start in the right direction and I want to also say that I would not be offended to see it go a lot farther than it does today.