

**Testimony of Briana E.HB-7050**

**IN SUPPORT OF HB 7050, AN ACT CONCERNING THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

Joint Committee on Judiciary

March 30, 2015

Submitted by Briana E.

Dear Representative Tong, Senator Coleman, Distinguished Members of the Committee on Children: I submit this testimony in support of Section 4 of HB 7050.

If you never had the humiliating experience of being shackled you never been in trouble with the law. It doesn't matter if you're an adult or a juvenile with petty theft: You're getting shackled regardless & getting robbed of due process.

I was shackled and I felt embarrassed, humiliated, and guilty no matter what. I felt like an animal.

Another injustice I can recall with shackling with one of my good friends had to go to the doctor to have her baby in shackles. Imagine the agony of not being able to deliver your child with flexibility in your legs to give birth.

One of my teachers at the time was working a detention center at it brought her Tto tears when she had to explain and relive the story, students of hers that would come to class right having a root canal and wisdom teeth taken out in chains. They would come to class with blood still in their mouths, imagine the pain of not being able to raise your hand to your cheek to comfort yourself.

Youth are shackled with leg irons, belly chains & handcuffs it discriminates and traumatizes them, shackling youth is unnecessary if the child doesn't post a threat.

I think the point is to scare young people into never wanting to come back jail, but what you are really doing is having youth lose faith in our court system because it appears that the Court doesn't care about the presumption of innocence

Medical professionals in states across the country agree that the harm of shackling young people affects them longer than if a adult was shackled. We should focus on keeping them out of the justice system, not putting them into it. Young people do not need to be shackled for courts to appear before a judge safely and efficiently.

Shackling is automatic in juvenile court, without even finding by a judge that a child

presents a flight or safety risk. While courts in other countries rarely allow adults to be shackled: It's crazy

I've been shackled.

Briana E

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Passages Program