

April 1, 2019

Testimony of:
Donna Palomba
Jane Doe No More, Founder and President

In Support of SB 3 AN ACT COMBATTING SEXUAL ASSAULT
AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Distinguished members of the Judicial Committee, my name is Donna Palomba, and I am the founder and president of Jane Doe No More, a non-profit 501c3 charity I started 12 years ago. I am here in support of SB 3, An Act Combatting Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment. In 1993 I was tied, bound and raped in my home in the middle of the night by a masked intruder while my young children slept down the hall.

After the crime, I had to endure severe re-victimization at the hands of law enforcement and other professionals. My perpetrator was eventually caught 11 years after the crime based on DNA evidence, but not before he attacked again and again, ultimately leading to the attempted kidnapping of a 17-year-old girl in Saratoga Springs, NY. In 2007, my case garnered national attention and was the impetus for legislation removing the statute of limitations on sexual assault cases involving DNA evidence in the state of Connecticut.

For a dozen years Jane Doe No More has helped educate audiences of all kinds about sexual crimes. And at the core of our work is our Survivors Speak program. We are empowering survivors to find their voice, advance their healing, and educate others. To date there are 55 women and men who have gone through our

program. The vast majority, 37 of them, are victims of child sexual abuse and their perpetrator, in most cases, was someone they loved and trusted. Perpetrators groom their victims. When the abuse begins at a young age, as you can imagine, the child doesn't know it is wrong or understand what is happening to them. We now understand more about the neuroscience of rape trauma and that victims of sexual assault, particularly child sexual abuse, may suppress these memories for years, sometimes decades. No one can predict when a triggering event may cause a victim to recall the abuse. For Deb, one of our child abuse survivors, it didn't happen until she was in her forties, married with her own children.

No one asks to be a victim, and we owe every victim of sexual crimes an opportunity to heal and find a path forward. Often the best path is pursuing charges against their perpetrator, to hold them accountable so they could do no further harm. That is a right I believe every victim is owed, and it should be their choice. These horrific crimes affects our lives in ways that most will never understand, in many ways it is a life sentence. I support SB 3 and implore you to remove the statute of limitations for the prosecution of sexual assault crimes entirely. It is the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Donna Palomba
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