

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Jessica Santana, and I am here to testify on behalf of Ken Krayske for the position of Connecticut Ombudsman.

I met Ken many years ago through my younger brother, Joey. Joey began working for a non-profit organization titled "Our Piece Of The Pie" or O.P.P. Ken was also the editor of a youth newspaper titled "Echoes from the Streets" ("Echoes"). Ken managed and mentored youths who were interested in journalism, politics, and informing themselves and other youths alike about the politics in their area. In turn, these young people could network with others in the area, as well as realize the resources the community at large has to offer and how they can contribute to their community.

Joey was beyond enamored with Ken and his mentorship skills. Ken was just as smitten with Joey and the other inquisitive kids enrolled in O.P.P. and Echoes. I believe the story goes that when Joey and Ken met, they realized that their birthdays were one day apart and that Joey shared a birthday with Ralph Nader - one of Ken's friends and idols. That was the moment Ken and Joey became friends, and eventually, Ken would become part of our extended family, and Joey would become a journalist for Echoes.

Ken orchestrated a trip to New Mexico with Joey and several other "Echoes" kids, embarking on a journey where they learned about the disadvantaged lives these New Mexicans faced and how they coped with the simplicities of their lives. They also learned about glass blowing and other techniques their host family provided. All in all, the kids got hands-on education on culture and what youths in New Mexico endure on a day-to-day basis. They went on to proudly write articles and display photos of their experiences on the Echoes forum.

Beyond the New Mexico trip, the "Echoes" kids interviewed and wrote about politicians, musicians, and community issues within their area. Ken always taught them to ask questions, never take no for an answer, take pride in themselves, and value the impact they bring to the world and to others. Most importantly, he encouraged them to advocate for themselves and for those who may be too shy to speak for themselves.

While Joey was fascinated with Ken and the mentoring he provided, Joey slowly steered away from the journalistic path he was on and eventually ended up being a CT inmate during his early adult years. While incarcerated, Joey would write to Ken about the conditions in the CT DOC, and in turn, Ken would publish these letters as articles to "Echoes from the Streets." Joey's article, "From the Belly of the Beast," depicted the inadequate medical conditions the inmates were subjected to and how Joey and the other inmates were treated. Unbeknownst to Ken and Joey, Ken would continue to be a voice for CT inmates and continue to write about the deplorable conditions they faced daily, many years later but as a lawyer, with Joey's sister aiding his cause.

In 2013, Ken continued his love of advocacy and was by my sister's side as she voiced her concerns during a board of ed meeting. While he did not speak, his presence showed how much he cared about our family and, more importantly, his concern for the youths in our area. Very soon after this encounter, Ken hired me to become his paralegal in his newly formed solo legal practice, Krayeske Law Offices.

During my tenure with Ken, I gained a great wealth of information. We started by advocating for people via CHRO and EEOC, and then we evolved to federal litigation and deliberate indifference cases. He has always encouraged me and everyone else he knows to ask questions and speak up against injustice. About four years into our law practice, a colleague brought us a case that would evoke flashbacks of Joey's article. And so began our journey to be the voice for CT inmates and their families.

Wayne World was our first inmate case. A man who was incarcerated for the murder of another man. Many people share the same mentality that if someone is in jail for murder, then who cares how they get treated when they're locked up. Ken has always said, "Never judge a person on their worst day," and that is the mindset he took for Wayne World and every inmate and client we have ever represented.

Ken started with Wayne World and then eventually began a Hep-C class action. The opioid epidemic is hard enough as it is, but when that is coupled with uncured Hep-C and repeat offenders passing Hep-C to one another, and a cure being available but only selectively given to certain inmates, you have the makings of new disasters and lawsuits waiting to happen.

Uncured Hep-C will lead to liver failure; for others, the chance to pass Hep-C to other intravenous users. All of this could be avoided had the CT DOC provided the Hep-C medication needed, and Ken made sure they did. Because of Ken, close to a thousand people were cured of this vile virus, making the CT DOC facilities safer for non-Hep-C inmates, as well as people within the community. The Hep-C class action also brought in new jobs for nurses and phlebotomists alike, as the DOC needed more staff to implement the new change Ken enacted. So not only did he change the medical distribution aspect of Hep-C, but he also helped many people get work that they may have needed. While this sounds like a lot for the State of CT to pay for, if the Hep-C medications were given as needed, the class action would not have caused so much monetary damage.

While this narrative is long, it is just a sliver of history in comparison to what Ken can and will accomplish as ombudsman. Ken is a leader of fairness, open-mindedness, and most of all, a lover of all information and knowledge. Ken was a journalist first and a lawyer second. He will not stop until he gets all the information he needs to make informed and fair decisions. Ken has fought hard for inmate rights, and it is only fitting that he be able to continue his work as a mediator and investigator for the State of Connecticut and continue his fight for fairness for all, regardless of act, color, creed, race, gender, etc. He knows the ins and outs of the system and is prepared to be the best advocate the State of Connecticut needs and yearns for. While he may have ruffled some feathers along the way, it is only because of his love for fairness in

Connecticut and in the world around him. Ken's intentions have always been very simple and very clear: fight for those who cannot fight for themselves. Ken is without a doubt the best-suited candidate for this position, as he has been advocating for inmate rights since before he knew it was his calling. He started with my brother in the late '90s, and while my brother is no longer with us, Ken continues to honor him and all disadvantaged people in Connecticut to this day with all he has accomplished and continues to accomplish. The appointment to the position of Ombudsman should be bestowed upon Ken as he has and always will be the advocate for the people of Connecticut.