

Senate Bill 1381
Statement by Angela Victor
2/7/11

I was invited here today to share my story with you.

Almost 3 years ago now,

I was sitting at work one morning when I received a call from my son's high school. They first said that my son was ok, but I needed to come to the school right away. My first thoughts were, he was in a fight, he cut some classes, or maybe he was caught with drugs, all things that you typically hear happen to high school age students. Much to my dismay, I was completely wrong. I arrived at the school and was told that a female teacher had inappropriate contact with my son....

Without getting into all of the details of the case, I'll try to summarize.

This teacher "friended him" on Facebook, became his friend, and then basically started seducing him. She had him meet her before school in her classroom where they could kiss and fondle each other, they had sexually related chats on the phone and on line. Then it escalated. She asked him to meet her at a store parking lot. When he arrived, he got into her family minivan and then she proceeded to have sexual intercourse with him.

The school heard a rumor that this may have occurred and began their investigation, they interrogated kids for a week trying to confirm. The last student they interrogated was my son, and that's when they called me.

Before all of this happened, my son was a happy go lucky, outgoing kid. He played sports, and had a lot of friends. He was pretty easy going. Since then his demeanor has completely changed, he seems to be angry at the world. He alienated himself from everyone, no longer went to any family functions, he lost his friends, lost his job, got depressed, stayed in his bedroom, didn't eat, lost weight, started doing drugs, he basically lost his self worth.

To make matters even worse, the teacher was idolized by her students. She had a Facebook page and had 300+ students as her friends. So when she was arrested the students got together and created a group on Facebook called "free zeo", which grew to a couple of hundred kids. They were standing behind her, sticking up for her.

So my son was unable to return to school. He tried to attend a football game and was heckled. Other students taunted him in the hallways. So then not only was he a victim of sexual abuse by this teacher, he then also became a victim of bullying from his fellow students.

Some of the other things that my son had to deal with as a result of this include:

Police – reporting all details of the incident, help police with the investigation, asked to wear a wire, testify at the preliminary hearing, and prepare Victim Impact Statement

Child Protective Services – be interview and photographed by CPS.

Health – get a physical exam, get tested for STD's, and attend therapy sessions (he went to 2 and then refused to go back)

Deprived of a Quality Education –he only received 2 hours a day 3 days a week at a tutoring center and passed 11th and 12th grade doing minimal work.

My son has basically been unable to move forward with his life since then. It's been almost 3 years and he is still doing nothing with his life. No college, won't or can't get a job, and he refuses to go to therapy and try to get help. He says he doesn't want to have to retell his story to a therapist. He just wants to forget it. He thinks he is fine.

I also want to add that, our whole family was also affected by this. Besides watching my son suffer through all of this, feeling helpless. I had the unfortunate experience of this being a small world. One of my coworkers happens to be the teacher's ex-sister in law. So I had to go into work every day (and still now) and try to work with this woman. She same last name as the teacher. Every time I get an email from this person (several a day) I am reminded of the teacher and the incident, I cannot escape it.

My other son is only 2 years older, and they had a lot of the same friends. My older son was faced with constant badgering about his brother and what happened. He felt ashamed and embarrassed. He resents my son to this day for this and it has ruined their relationship.

In closing, I am speaking out today, in hopes that I may be able to do something to help prevent this from happening to another child. I don't want another child to have to go through what my son has. His life has been turned upside down and he still hasn't landed on his feet. We need to protect our children in any way that we can. I believe this bill can help us do that.

Thank you.

Angie Victor