

Eleanor Busby
Damariscotta
LD 670

My name is Eleanor Busby , and I am here to speak in strong support of An Act to Address Coercive Control in Domestic Abuse Cases. This is not just another bill—it is a necessary lifeline for victims like me who have been financially devastated by the abusive control of a partner.

I am 72 years old, and instead of retiring in safety and dignity, I face the grim reality of working until the day I die simply to survive. Why? Because my ex-spouse exerted financial control over me in ways that destroyed my independence, my security, and my future.

Over the years, I worked hard and saved diligently, setting aside what I could for retirement. My life savings were not extravagant, but they amounted to nearly \$250,000—invested in my home, which was designed to be broken into rental units which would give me stability in my later years. But my ex-husband took that from me through deception, coercion, and outright fraud. He forged my signature and signed away my savings, and when I finally discovered the full extent of his manipulation, it was too late.

He controlled our household finances under the pretense of "managing" them for our well-being, but in reality, he let our bills go unpaid while keeping me in the dark. When I finally broke free, I found myself with ruined credit, a mountain of debt, and no home to call my own. The financial abuse was not just an inconvenience—it was an annihilation of my stability, forcing me into a cycle of struggle that I will never escape.

This is why this bill matters. Coercive control is a form of domestic abuse that is just as destructive as physical violence, yet our laws fail to protect victims from its insidious reach. By criminalizing financial abuse and coercive control, we are not just punishing abusers; we are giving survivors the legal recourse they desperately need to reclaim their lives. We are affirming that people like me deserve a second chance.

No one should be able to strip another person of their autonomy, their financial future, and their dignity without consequence. Without laws addressing coercive control, abusers continue to act with impunity, and victims remain trapped in a cycle of dependence and despair.

I urge you to pass this legislation and send a clear message: Financial abuse is not just unethical—it is criminal. Survivors deserve justice, and they deserve the opportunity to rebuild their lives without the constant shadow of their abuser's control.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to protecting victims of domestic abuse.