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LD 670

Coercive Control Bill

Dear Committee,

For twenty years my abuser used coercive control to keep myself and my children in a constant state of panic and confusion. The one example I would like to share with you is a tactic he used on my adult autistic daughter. In this example I'll refer to her as Dawn.

After graduating high school Dawn began working a few hours a week cleaning houses. Her boss would come by and pick her up on the days she worked. She would often have coffee with her or have a coffee on her return home. Occasionally she would forget to take the k-cup out of the coffee maker. For almost two years our abuser would take the k-cup and put it either in her shoe or her coat pocket, so she would find it while getting ready to go out the door to work in the morning. It took her almost two years to tell me this was happening to her.

The abuser knew when Dawn found the k-cup it would throw her into a panic, and she would worry about it all the time she was at work. When she came home from work, the abuser was almost always sitting in a chair facing the entryway and she would have to walk past him to get to her room.

When Dawn told me this was happening, I began checking her shoes and jacket every morning to make sure there wasn't a k-cup hidden inside. Sometimes weeks or months would go by, and nothing would happen but the moment I let my guard down she or I would find another k-cup. Shortly before we finally were able to leave the abuser, I confronted him about the hidden k-cups, he just became very angry and blamed Dawn for telling me about it.

This was just one of the hundreds of ways he used coercive control to keep us walking on eggshells. This insidious form of control takes away the victims' self-confidence and slowly whittles away any semblance of free will. Please support this bill and the next time you have a cup of coffee, think of my Dawn.

Sincerely, Lisa C. Perry