

April 10, 2023

Good morning Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety. My name is Mary Kamradt, I live in Rockport and I am a survivor of 35 years of domestic violence. As a representative of Finding Our Voices, I am here today to testify in support of LD 692.

In 2015, my ex-husband set my home on fire while I was in bed. I was injured, and my dog was killed. He was indicted for arson, attempted murder, and animal cruelty and released to await trial. During this time, my ex stalked me 24/7, coerced, and threatened me. He was arrested again, this time for witness intimidation. And once again he was released into the community pending trial.

During this period of trauma, my victim advocate failed to communicate with me regarding hearings, plea deals, and even my victim impact statement. I found myself scrambling to obtain information about my case. I felt unseen and unimportant. My abuser was given a sweet plea bargain deal. He was sentenced to 22 months in prison, served only a year, and was released for "good behavior".

After years of being terrorized by the person who vowed to love me, I was relieved when he went to prison because I knew he couldn't come after me to finish the job. But that sense of security vanished too soon. I live in constant fear for my safety and that of my family. It is my burden to make sure my address is confidential. It is my burden to try and scrub my personal information from the internet. And it is my burden to manage debilitating symptoms of PTSD while navigating my safety.

Domestic abusers stalk and terrorize their victims. They perceive them as easy targets. And this puts the community at risk. But victims are just as much a part of that community. They should be seen and heard. Because they know that if these cowards have no regard for their intimate partners or children (or pets), they certainly have no regard for anyone and thus, are "reasonably likely to pose a risk to the safety of others".

According to a Johns Hopkins study, 59.1% of mass shootings between 2014 and 2019 were DV-related and in 68.2% of mass shootings, the perpetrator either killed at least one partner or family member or had a history of DV.¹

I ask you to consider the voices of survivors here today, the safety of their families, and the community by passing this bill. Thank you.

¹ Geller, L.B., Booty, M. & Crifasi, C.K. The role of domestic violence in fatal mass shootings in the United States, 2014–2019. *Inj. Epidemiol.* 8, 38 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-021-00330-0>