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Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Chelsea and I am a prosecutor in Penobscot County. I recently argued and received a life sentence in an aggravated attempted murder case. Mr. Carter, the defendant, had already served just shy of 17 years in prison for an incident which culminated in a chase, a hit and run, pointing a gun at law enforcement, and which ended in a brief standoff. Mr. Carter also had many uncharged instances of volatile behavior throughout his life, like a protection order that the mother of his children had gotten against him for an assault that occurred while she was pregnant. Mr. Carter was also on probation for a domestic violence assault against a different victim at the time that he committed the conduct that brought him to me.

On May 26, 2023 Mr. Carter believed that his then girlfriend, yet another victim, had cheated on him. He grabbed her by throat and strangled her. She testified that she thought she was going to die then, that she felt like her eyes were popping out of her head, but Mr. Carter stopped and told her to sit on the edge of her bed. He wanted answers. He asked the victim when her children would be home and told her they were going to find her body in pieces. She tried to escape and made it outside, screaming for help, but Mr. Carter chased her down and struck her in the head with a hammer. When she collapsed, he struck her twice more in the temple. He then drug her, incapacitated, to her own car and drove her out to a remote location. Over a period of hours, he beat and terrorized her. When she would regain consciousness, he would force her to look at herself, beaten beyond recognition, and say to her "you're dying". Dispatch was able to ping the victim's phone and when the police arrived Mr. Carter refused to follow orders to get out of the car. He tried to drive off with the victim still in the car, nearly striking a trooper who was out of his cruiser and who ultimately had to shoot Mr. Carter to save the victim's life. When a search warrant was executed on Mr. Carter's phone after the attempted murder there was child sexual assault material on it.

The victim's surgeon testified that her injuries were appallingly horrific, that she had in excess of 20 skull fractures and that he and his team had stopped counting. He told me that he had no medical explanation for her survival. One of the officers testified that as he assessed the victim on scene that day, he thought she had been shot in the head because of the damage to her face and skull.

This defendant was a man in his forties who had multiple opportunities to rehabilitate throughout his life but instead had continued to be a threat to the public, to the members of law enforcement forced to respond to his crimes, and most of all, to women. There are many more things I could tell you about this man and this case, but I'll leave it at this: I developed a conviction that this was a person who should spend the rest of his life in prison and the judge who sentenced Mr. Carter agreed and I have to believe to that if you all saw the evidence in this case, if you saw the victim on that day and what she continues to experience to this day, I have to believe you would agree as well.

Thank you,

Chelsea Lynds