

Mr. Chairman & Committee members, thank you for allowing me to speak today.

My name is Susan Schyck. I am the mother of Michael Schyck, an Ohio State Alumni, a former student-athlete, and one of the many abused victims of Dr. Strauss. My purpose of being here today is to give you a different perspective of the impact the horrific actions of Dr. Strauss and the Ohio State University has had on my son and our family.

Seventeen months ago, I learned for the first time that my son was a victim of sexual abuse while a student-athlete at OSU. It floored me to hear what Mike went through. I had no idea!

To truly understand the impact, you should know who my son was growing up. Mike was the easiest and most pleasant kid you could be around. Polite, kind, and he would do anything for you. I could have had a hundred kids like him.

He was my best friend. He loved to be around me while most kids watched TV occupying their time with other activities. Mike enjoyed doing things with his family, and his personality resonated with our friends and other family members. Mike came from a loving family, and to say that Mike was naïve to the world would be an understatement.

I can remember when we dropped Mike off at Ohio State his freshman year. We helped him check into Morrill Towers, got him all set up, and then said our goodbyes. I was scared and nervous for him, but he was ready to go.

Imagine, just imagine that within a week of dropping your son off at one of the largest schools in the country, in the midst of him figuring out his class schedule, wrestling practice schedule, and getting to know his new roommates and his new teammates, your son gets sexually abused by a team doctor at his team physicals! And to find out this went on for years!

I am not sure if you all have children or grandchildren, but as a parent, your job is to protect your kids from the bad in the world. After finding out what had happened to Mike, I felt overwhelmed with guilt because one wasn't able to do just that... protect my child!

As Mike's mother, I am a part of the collateral damage caused by Dr. Strauss. Even though the abuse did not happen directly to me, I feel a heavy burden of guilt, shame, sadness, anger, and a wide range of other emotions.

In May, I was able to read the independent report conducted by Perkin's Coie that OSU had done. I read about the sickening abuse that was widespread. To know it had gone on for so long, and reported so many times, yet nothing was ever done... it is just inexcusable.

Why was nothing ever done when all the complaints were coming in. I am angered over this. We put our son in the care of the University, and they were supposed to watch over him. They failed! Ohio State and President Drake took responsibility (of the past) for knowing about the abuse, doing nothing about it, and failing my son and so many other athletes and students.

During Mike's time at OSU, I saw a change in his personality. The first time Mike came home from school, there was something different, a changed kid. He had a short temper which he had not had before, and his easy demeanor turned to one where he challenged things more often and his willingness to do things ... Mother and Son things stopped. We never were able to understand why the change, but 17 months ago, when we found out about the abuse, looking back, it all made sense.

Watching Mike grow into adulthood, and seeing the decisions he made in his life, and some of the struggles and challenges he faces now make more sense.

My son is a single dad, taking care of two beautiful children, and I believe he has struggled with relationships throughout his life due to the impact of Dr. Strauss's abuse. Specifically, with TRUST!

Now, I am not a psychologist, but my opinion is that Dr. Strauss's abuse created a change in Mike that he has carried with him all of these years. I saw Mike go through his darkest days in his marriage and divorce, and trust was center stage. Through all of this, my relationship and my husband's relationship with Mike was affected.

When Mike shared with my husband and me the extent of what happened with him 17 months ago, we did what we had always done, and that was to be there for support in every way. I was present when Mike was courageous enough to speak for the first time at Ohio State's Board of Trustees' — meeting back in November. I have been an ear for all of what Mike has had to share, and we have seen him be strong for himself and so many other students and student-athletes. I could not be prouder of him. He is a survivor.

Never did I think as a 73-year-old mom, I would be standing here asking you to help Mike and 300 plus victims by passing a bill to allow these men to seek justice. You see, our anger isn't there because of the abuse that happened, and now finding out about it. It is much deeper than you can ever imagine.

How would you all feel if you knew your son had been abused and years of abuse of other student-athletes were reported well before your own child's abuse? How would you feel if important people with the University who could have done something about the abuse did nothing? How would you feel if the University your son attended apologized for the abuse, apologized for fundamentally failing your child while in college, but is now doing all they can to dismiss them of their day in court?

This is why I am angry! My son gave his heart and soul to the Ohio State University. Mike was a 2-Time All-American and one of the best wrestlers in the history of the program. Mike deserves better from the University. So, I am standing here asking – No, I am begging that each and every one of you in this committee to do the right thing to help pass this bill. Not in a week, or a month, or a few months. Do it now! I'm not sure how all this works here, but my recommendation is that you vote - YES! And help pass this bill. Give my son, and all the other victims the opportunity to hold people accountable. It is the right thing to do; and as a parent, you'd want the same thing for your own child.

Thank you for taking the time to listen.