

Testimony

I want to thank you for this opportunity to come to you today in support of the H.B.3 Bill. Let me introduce myself to you. My name is Laura Cowan, a single Mother of 3, I'm also a speaker, educator, radio personality, activist, and a domestic violence advocate, but most importantly I'm a survivor of domestic violence.

In 1999 I endured and escaped from unimaginable abuse. To keep me from leaving, my abuser took me and my children and held us captive in a cold dark garage with no heat, food, and water or plumbing for over six months. We lived at that time in the mountains over Temecula CA. in a rural part of town called Aguanga, It was like an Indian reservation and houses were far in between.

I was repeatedly raped, beaten and starved, alongside my children. Stripped of everything but the will to survive, not only for myself, but for my kids; I would then decide to do the unthinkable. Fearing that I would never make it out of that garage alive, I began to keep detailed accounts on pieces of

scrap paper that I found throughout the garage in boxes of the horrific daily abuse that my children and I endured. However, it would not be until an unplanned outside visit to the post office with my capture, that my life would forever be changed.

On that faithful day April 8th, 1999, I was able to pass that note that I kept pleading for help to a post office clerk, who was then able to alert the proper authorities. The next day, the Hemet County Sheriffs would emerged onto our capture's doorstep, where my children and I where finally rescued.

He was arrested, found guilty on several charges, such as child endangerment, rape, assault with a deadly weapon, domestic violence, false imprisonment and torture. He is now serving 7 consecutive life terms in Kern County at a California Prison.

Today I'm presently employed as a Resident Services Liaison with Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA); Working in Resident Services as their Domestic Violence Advocate.

I assist CMHA Residents by empowering, educating and advocating Residents for justice to end domestic violence and child abuse by providing workshops, materials, guidance and emotional support.

I use my radio personality status on two radio shows, VoiceItRadio and WOVU 95.9 FM to bring awareness to the community about Domestic Violence, Teen Dating Violence, Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence against Men.

I was at the vigil of Aisha Fraser. That day I observed a sea of people holding hands, candles and chanting songs, some who knew her, like her friends, family and students. And some were total strangers coming out to give support.

I have been to many vigils of slain Women due to domestic violence. Women are losing their lives every day; and not to leave out the fact that Men too endure domestic violence.

This Bill which is named after Aisha Fraser is very important and will help to protect domestic violence victims, with the three main components of the bill, Aisha's Law will help to reform the state's domestic violence laws. Thank you for your time.