

**Proponent Testimony – House Bill 310**

**Michael Greenberg**

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Chair Jones, Vice-Chair Manchester, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 310.

I have been in a leadership position with fraternity life for almost 40 years, and during that time have been fortunate to travel to over 200 campuses meeting with parents, students, and administrators. The stories that I have compiled and witnessed are too numerous to present, too similar in their connectivity and yet all have similar outcomes of destruction and emotional suffering to the individuals and their families. Sometimes the results can even be death which never was the intention but as in every case a little hazing will always escalate to big hazing and often times get out of control.

The act of using power or control of individuals in a subordinate role with the enticement of gaining full privileges or membership, or having to prove yourself for acceptance or worse non-acceptance in membership is unconscionable. The justification of making others earn something becomes an excuse and a reason that seemingly placates the hazers and destroys mentally and physically their subjects.

My son was hazed brutally, and I am fortunate he survived. His suffering included physical and incredible mental torture. Now why didn't he walk away? His father was a major volunteer for the fraternity and in an effort to please his dad it almost cost us. He was punched in the face, had sleep deprivation, and the worse part was the mental anguish that made him feel he would never be accepted. It destroyed his self esteem. Despite attempts by me to make him quit his pride and determination took over 3 years of intense counseling to get him back to himself.

We must enact hazing laws as a deterrent that make the consequences for hazing a criminal conviction and show the pitfalls and jeopardy of committing these heinous acts. University must not just close organizations and keep the individual students enrolled, they must enact a suspension system that shows the real consequences. The more deterrents and consequences the less hazing will transpire.

Thank you for the opportunity to present before you today. I would be happy to take any questions from the committee.