

May 19, 2020

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this impassioned letter for your consideration of what I believe to be a common-sense law; a reasonable approach that could prevent tragedy and heartbreak for an untold number of children.

Several events occurred in 2019 which brought Erin's Law into my focus. Early in 2019, a friend of mine took her own life after years of torment inflicted by her sexual abuser. We were close friends when younger, and during this time she shared with me some of the events that had taken place in her own home. As a young teenaged girl, she was sexually assaulted by her father. After years of abuse, her cries for help were suppressed by her other family members. She struggled to accept reality for the rest of her life and was constantly told by her family that nothing wrong had happened to her.

At the age of 30, she took her own life after serving in the US Navy as a meteorologist for nearly a decade. Close to the time of her death, she shared with others how painful her life had become with her father's persistent intrusions into her life. Her father placed blame at her feet through her very last days. After years of manipulation from her abuser, she needed reminded that what had happened to her was wrong. She explicitly asked for a friend to clarify this just days before taking her own life.

As a child, the only education she had about sexual abuse came from her own abuser. She was never taught about inappropriate adult behaviors from a neutral party. She was not this abuser's only victim; three young girls in total were assaulted.

Later in 2019, news came from my hometown (Springboro, OH) that a physical education teacher at an elementary school had been inappropriately touching his students. This well-publicized behavior went on long enough for over 70 children to be assaulted. It simply took the children too long to realize what was happening was not okay.

The answer to this issue is not one of great complexity. Children simply need educated by professionals on the subject in an appropriate manner. This is what Erin's Law will accomplish. It will save lives.

Thank you for your consideration,

W. Joseph Mansfield
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