

Testimony from Teresa Ruth Pace

Interested party in SB 47

Ohio Senate Judiciary Committee, April 10, 2018

Good morning Chairman Ecklund and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I am presenting this testimony in reference to my son. About eight years ago, when he was 19, he had a girlfriend who was 15. They were both in High School. The mother would even call my son to come over. When she learned that they had engaged in sexual activity, she pressed charges. Through the system, he ended up receiving a year in prison from complications as a result of the initial infraction. My son and this woman, now a mother of two children who is 23 years of age, have remained friends over the years.

Because of the four-year age difference between my son and his girlfriend, I believe that he now is classified as a Tier II sex offender, along with predators who have had prior felonious sex convictions. He does not have a predatory bone in his body, however because of this Scarlet Letter, will have trouble finding a place to live or a job for most of his lifetime going forward.

Because of Steven's prison sentence, this law will not allow him to reduce his sex offender classification. He falls between the cracks. There needs to be a clause in the bill to allow for review of circumstances when the person does not have the profile of a sexual predator, but complications arose that resulted in incarceration. Because of psychological problems, his ability to maintain a normal life is extremely difficult, and the last thing he needs is this stigma attached when it does not belong on his back.

Thank you, and I will do my best to answer any questions.