

Good afternoon,

My name is Steve, and I am a 70-year-old BSA sexual abuse survivor. I am a successful, retired Software Engineer and a BSA sexual abuse survivor. I am a husband, father, grandfather, true friend and a BSA sexual abuse survivor.

In July 2020 my husband came in from the garage to find me collapsed and sobbing on the family room floor. I was watching the television and saw an advertisement for the BSA sexual lawsuit. All the memories I had suppressed for 55 years came flooding back to me and I was inconsolable for several days.

I was sexually abused, in all forms, by my assistant scout master between the ages of 10 – 16. All the abuse happened while I was visiting Camp Falling Rock in Licking County. Those visits were approximately 15 times a year ranging from a weekend campout to a two week stay. The abuse happened almost every day on those campouts. Throughout the abuse, I was able to continue my scouting path because, that is what was expected of me. I received my Eagle Scout rank the day after I turned 16. I went on to get my Order of the Arrow rank within the next six months. After that, I quit scouting completely.

I was in therapy back in the early 1990 to deal with my other sexual abuses that happened after scouting plus, the additive personality traits that surfaced in my 30s. In the late 90's I wrote a book of poems. One of the poems was called "Holes in my Life". As I started to heal from the BSA realization, the holes I referred to in the poem started to fill. When I started therapy again in 2020, all the walls the therapist could not break through from 1990-1995 started collapsing.

I have been dealing with the guilt of what happened to me as a scout every day for the last 2 1/2 years. I have been somewhat coping with everything, but I cannot recover the emotional, physical, and financial situation this abuse has cost me. I have become more introverted, do not want to socialize, and have gained almost 60 lbs. Worst of all, is the fact that when I decided to share the news that I was going on record to support the Scout's Honor Law to my friends and family; my brother, his family and two of my children disowned me. I no longer can visit with my two grandsons.

In conclusion, I stand before you today, looking like I have my life together. But what you really see is the facade I have learned to put up as a shield. The shield is part of the coping mechanism abuse victims learn to use to shut out the world. What you do not see behind the façade is that I am a recovering drug addict, workaholic, shopaholic, and a co-dependent broken man. I am asking you to make a decision that will financially impact the rest of my life. Your decision on this law may, one day effect my bank account balance. But no amount of money can bring back the time I have lost with my family or erase the hurt and shame I feel EVERY SINGLE DAY!

Thank you for your time.