

Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee
HB 161
Proponent Testimony
Written Only Testimony by Emily Showman

I want to touch base on all aspects of the bill because every component is important. If we get rid of the exception of martial sexual offenses it would help so many spouses who laid their trust in someone who said they loved them and vowed to take care, but then were sexual assaulted by said spouse to be free and able to get justice and not be held back due to wearing wedding bands and possibly sharing a last name. Victims who aren't married are silenced already based on fear and shame, but imagine what it feels like to have a bill keep you silent; it's mentally exhausting and emotionally damaging to a victim who has already been through so much. I believe there is no concern for the exception to be put to rest because it will set survivors free.

Without the exception in place, a survivor's life will no longer be like walking on eggshells being forced to sexually interact with their spouse when they don't want to. Their days will be so much brighter and the world will be more fresh for them and not seen as holding them in a horrible and abusive situation just because of a legal contract that ties their credit scores together.

With the knowledge of the exception being gone, my heart lightens and feels happier that now all victims of martial sexual offense can get justice and peace.

Marriage is what most people say; it's "marrying your best friend". Would a good friend hurt you? The answer is yes because I know what it feels like. I was raped by a good friend; if good friends can sexual assault someone then what's stopping a spouse? Nothing. We all deserve justice no matter if it's a stranger, friend, or partner. They made an oath

or vow to love and protect you and they didn't live up to it. It makes them equally a criminal as every other offender. Thank you.