

HB 96 WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 05/12/2025

Name: Angelique Uwase, Student At Meadowdale Career Technology Center, reading for London Jackson

Are you representing: Yourself **Organization**

Organization (If Applicable): Dayton Public Schools

Position/Title: Student

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? **Yes**

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): House Bill 96

Specific Issue: Domestic Violence Funding

Are you testifying as a: **Interested Party**

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? **Yes**

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? **1-2 minutes**

Please provide a brief statement on your position: **The following testimony advocates for more funding for domestic violence resources as a public health issue.**

London Jackson: Fund Programs that Help People Leave their Abusers

I would love for the representatives to address all of the domestic violence cases we have today. 38% of women and 33% men of Ohio have experienced violence with their significant other (Dolan Zimmerman). In 2019 there were 76,203 law enforcement calls for domestic violence incidents (Dayton Daily News). This is taking a toll on the mental and physical health of the victims, and creating an increased demand for social services. An average of 24 people a minute are victims of physical abuse, rape and or stalking by their intimate partner (National Domestic Violence Hotline). This can rub off on kids that see this and permanently affect their mental health just as much and change the outlook on how family relations should be, leading to long term issues. There can be economic consequences like the father or mother losing their jobs. At its worst, domestic violence can turn into murder.

This issue matters to me because I have witnessed domestic violence for a majority of my life and I know how it can affect people. We must step up to support victims by advocating for them and educating others on family violence. It affects people in every country regardless of religion, culture or economic status. It doesn't only affect the victims but also their families and communities.

The reason why this is happening is because of control and power dynamics, and mental health issues. Some people use violence to exert dominance in their relationships. The people around in the community should advocate and communicate with police. This will take a lot of awareness and education for those who don't know. There are hotlines you can call but when do you think someone will have the time to make a call and vent about what's hurting them with no help? This simply is not enough for victims. Hotlines alone will not help them get away from their situations. Problems will still linger on in the homes. It's not as easy to leave as you think until you're in that situation. You can't just get up and walk away from these types of things because they will still follow you.

I believe that our representatives should try to focus on creating and enforcing laws that protect these victims and provide them the necessary support. They have the power of legislation and awareness campaigns. It is a reasonable request because domestic violence is a serious issue that affects many individuals and families. If we don't stop this it will only lead to more cases of murder or even worse. This will forever be a generational curse. If we succeed we'll have a safer and supportive environment, we can reduce these cases. How will you make this your business to give people the better help and love that they deserve? Have you ever witnessed the hurt that goes on?

The Pulitzer Center reported that across the globe, funding for domestic violence prevention went down by more than \$150 million between 2020 and 2022. We must decide if we want to be part of that downward spiral, or if we want to show that we really do care about stopping violence at home. It's not just about more strictly punishing people who abuse their loved ones, though that is important. We also must provide the funding needed for programs that help people leave abusive situations, and help them get back on their feet after so they don't have to go back to their abusers. As a representative, you have the power to write laws and direct our tax dollars to worthy projects. Can you commit to protect funding for programs like the Violence Against Women Act?

We can follow the example of Uganda and build more safe houses that help people flee their abusers. We can take a lesson from Rwanda, where they started programs that teach men how to be role models and have healthy relationships (Moraa Obiria, Pulitzer Center). No one should have to endure violence at home.

I close with the words of Joseph Ouna, a village elder in Nairobi who was interviewed by Pulitzer journalists: “wako wengi wanaumia lakini kuongea ni shida (There are many who are victims but they can't talk).” Please, representatives, be the voice for the survivors and victims who cannot speak.