The Senate Judiciary Committee

Proponent Testimony for Senate Bill 421

Shirley Hellenthal, Survivor'

May 20th, 2026

Chair: Senator, Nathan Manning, Vice Chair: Senator, Michele Reynolds, Ranking Members: Senator, Paula Hicks-Hudson, and other distinguished members: Senator, Louis Blessing, Senator, Al Cutrona, Senator, Theresa Gavarone, and Senator, Kent Smith.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the change of the Ohio Statute of Limitations (SOL) regarding R. C. 2305.111(B), Adult Assault and Battery, from a one year statute of limitation to a five year statute of limitations allowing victims an extended period of time to file civil suit against their offender.

My name is Shirley Hellenthal, I will soon celebrate my 77 th Birthday, being a survivor of elder physical, sexual assault, neglect, and financial exploitation. I will keep my narrative brief.

In a whirlwind of a relationship by a trusted friend of 40 years, I found that I was misled and gaslighted into a fraudulent marriage on October 06, 2019.

On April 28, 2020, he informed me that he had never loved me and wanted a divorce. Devastated, I ran to my bedroom, when getting in bed I fell landing on the floor. He rushed into my room, grabbed me by my right wrist, twisting my arm, yanked me off the floor and slung me onto the bed. My 4 ft. 9 in. frame was no match for his 230-pound 6 ft. 3 in. stature. Diagnosis in June noted by my physician as a physical and emotional breakdown uncontrollable chronic hypertension, angina, and panic anxiety disorder in danger of having a heart attack or stroke due to marital conflict. By September 2020, I weighed approximately 100 pounds, having lost all control of my body confined to a wheelchair for mobility. Kept in a constant state of panic and fear of retaliation. I was forced to make decisions, I wouldn't have made otherwise in selling real estate, paying for my own medical care, and forced to financially support him.

September 23, 2021, I was taken to the hospital after a well check and removed from the home and placed in a shelter with Home Health Services until bed space became available in a skilled nursing rehab facility.

On October 04, 2021, he filed a fault- based divorce summoning me to court by public notification to control the narrative of court proceedings utilizing the judicial system against me to ensure he avoided prosecution. On March 16, 2023, I suffered another heart attack from being left alone with him in the courthouse foyer prior to hearing.

My purpose is now to advocate giving a voice to victims in changing legislation and statutes of limitations to ensure all avenues within our judicial system may be pursued by victims in receiving the justice they so rightly deserve.

I am requesting the Senate Judicial Committee take notice to extend the time frame to five years for the Statute of Limitations under R.C.2305.111 (B). In doing so, Victims are given much needed time in the rediscovery of themselves and to navigate their way back to health, security, and wholeness.

I welcome any questions you may have. You can contact me at 740-606-6118 or e-mail shcourt2023@yahoo.com. I appreciate your time immensely. Thank You!

Respectfully Submitted,

Shirley Hellenthal

Shirley Hellenthal/ Survivor