

Chairman Butler, Ranking Member Stinziano, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of HB 1. My name is Victoria Morgan, and I represent the Cincinnati nonprofit, She's Healed. I am here today to voice my strong support for this dating violence bill, and I thank representative Sykes for this opportunity.

I urge you to pass this important legislation. I myself was a victim of domestic violence. The guy was drunk when he showed up to my house and I wouldn't let him in. Because my children were in the house I came outside to try and diffuse the situation. The first kick down the stairs definitely startled me. I jumped up and went running back up the stairs and I was kicked back down a second time. The impact of the concrete caused me to urinate on myself. I busted my knee and lost some skin on my back shoulder. Getting an epo that night was not an option for me. He didn't live with me, we weren't married and we had no children together. I've worked with women whose stories are similar to mine and have heard stories of others who weren't as fortunate as I to have survived. Last year I was made aware of the dating violence bill that KY was working on. I began asking questions about the current laws in Ohio, and wondered what I could do to protect those individuals here. The Kentucky bill passed last year, and we need to follow suit. Currently Ohio is one of only 2 states that haven't added dating violence to their domestic violence laws. This legislation will have a great impact on our community and ensure the personal safety of dating couples that current protective orders don't afford them. On average, 24 people/ minute are victims of interpersonal violence which includes rape, physical violence and stalking. That's more than 12 million men and women over the course of the year. Even if you've never been a victim, we're all affected by dating/domestic violence. It costs more than \$37 billion/year in law enforcement involvement, legal work, medical and mental health treatment, and lost productivity at companies.

I'm so grateful for your attention to this important issue and your commitment to ensure the safety of all Ohio residents by passing this bill. Thank you and I will take any questions you have for me.