

Good afternoon, my name is Roger Beedon and I'm here to support House Bill 249.

I'm a 1990 Ohio State graduate.

I came to OSU on a scholarship after being recruited in the high school "entry draft" by the Montreal Canadiens. So, Ohio State was supposed to be a developmental training ground for my professional hockey career.

In high school, I competed at a very high level.

I was a sophomore the first time Dr. Strauss abused me during my annual team physical. Frankly, I was so shocked at what he was doing that I froze like a deer in the headlights.

I knew then that something was wrong, but I couldn't quite put my finger on it.

My junior year physical was pretty much a repeat of sophomore year, but then Strauss escalated the abuse during my senior year physical.

It's difficult to talk about this in detail. But I vividly recall standing naked in front of Strauss, with my underwear in my hand, as Strauss lifted my penis toward my belly button and fondled my testicles for 5-10 minutes. I think he finally stopped because he couldn't get me aroused.

After that, I became fearful of Strauss and began to turn inward.

Instead of focusing on my grades and hockey, I focused on avoiding Strauss because I didn't want to give him a chance to hurt me again.

My biggest fear was that I'd have to see him for an injury since he was our team doctor.

As a result, my grades began to suffer senior year and so did my performance on the ice.

I was no longer competing at a high level.

Of course, senior year is the most important time for athletes who are hoping to turn pro because that's when the scouts are around.

So, that is my personal heartbreak: I truly believe Strauss ruined my chances to turn pro with the Montreal Canadiens.

Now I'd like to talk about seeing Strauss's photo in the newspaper last year. Quite simply, a tidal wave of emotions flooded over me – I became anxious, my heart started pounding and I had to remind myself that he can't hurt me anymore.

Then I took the call from the investigators at Perkins Coie, which was very traumatic. It took me about 20 minutes to compose myself after we hung up.

That's when I realized I'd been pushing my hurt and anger aside for years.

Since then, I've been diagnosed with PTSD and depression.

Sometimes I don't like myself very much. So, I'm working toward getting back to being a nice guy, the positive upbeat person who sees the best in everybody.

Because this has changed me: I'm continually asking myself, "Why did I have to go through this? And what about all the others?"

You see, I know that people in authority at Ohio State knew Strauss was abusing athletes because I PERSONALLY told Bill Davis, who was the assistant athletic trainer at the time.

Bill asked me and one of my teammates, who was also assaulted, about our physical exams. We told him our stories in detail and he seemed concerned, but nobody ever asked me about it again.

And here's the rub: If someone had done something when I reported Strauss 30 years ago, none of the other men you'll hear from this afternoon would have been abused.

Not a single one.

I also want to say that I love Ohio State, so I'm very disappointed that HB 249 is necessary. Make no mistake – it's necessary – because OSU steadfastly refuses to make us whole, we victims feel HB 249 is the only way to make sure this never happens again.