

Hello, my name is Joshua Stacey. I am a resident of Toledo, Ohio and attend Citylight Church. Two months ago, I sat in this room as my pastor George Williams stood before you to give testimony for HR 180. Hearing him, as well as others, bring testimony before you in regards to the topic of pornography, and its effects on a personal and community level moved me powerfully. I stand here before you today to speak on behalf of a community of people whom I guarantee are greatly affected by pornography and its effects on a personal, family and community level.

I stand before you today as a husband, a minister, a college graduate and a leader in my faith community. I also stand before you today as an ex-drug addict, an ex-alcoholic, an ex-convict, and as a registered sex offender in the state of Ohio.

I'm here to speak to you today on behalf of the lepers of the 21st century, the unwanted, the outcast, and in the eyes of many, the scum of the earth. I stand here for a community of broken men and women, who through the oversexualization of our culture, and the addictive nature of their own humanity, fell victim to the snare of sexual addiction and perversion that lead them to become deviants in the eyes of the community around them.

This was my story. I first discovered pornography around the age of eight or nine, finding copies of playboy in one of my family members bathrooms. Then one of my friends introduced me to internet pornography when I was twelve. With these things at my fingertips, it began the struggle in myself of self gratification, and when I became sexually active at 13 shaped my view of sexuality with a partner.

As I sat in the room here two months ago, I came to the revelation that these things that happened in my life, directly shaped my view of sex, and perverted it. The thing about pornography is that it draws you in, to darker places than you would admit that you want to go. Like other drugs, it becomes a doorway to the darker recesses of the human heart where the things of taboo are looked at with a different lens. It desensitizes you to destruction that it brings to your mind when you look at others, especially of the opposite sex. It so distorted my mind, along with my drug use and excessive drinking at the time, that I felt nothing when I sexually assaulted my ex-fiance. I didn't have to address darkness inside of me until it became known, and I hid in the shadows of my shame.

I don't stand here today to shift blame, I take account for my actions and can say that although I made that choice, my use and viewing of pornographic material directly lead me to the actions that produced the behaviors that I exhibited. After spending two years incarcerated with other sex offenders, I can tell you that in hearing their journeys, I could hear my own life in their words. I have truly been blessed that, upon my release from prison nearly five years ago, I found a church community who loved me as I was. A community of people who walked beside me as I found healing through the blood of Jesus Christ, and strength to overcome the struggle with porography and sexual addiction in my own life. This included my incredible wife, whom I

met within that community, who walks alongside me as I am able to stand for a group of people whom no one desires to see redemption for, and in moments like this one, to give them a voice.

As one who bears this title of sex offender, and as one who lived with the struggle of viewing pornography, I ask you to stand up for generations to come. That they would not be ignorant to the deception that pornographic material brings to the minds of young and old. I ask you to lay the bricks that would build a wall of protection for many to come so that they wouldn't be ensnared in the same struggle that men and women bear today. Many states have already gone before you, but the saying stands true "As Ohio goes, so goes the nation".