

Testimony in Support of HB3 To address making changes to civil and criminal law regarding domestic violence, address State Highway Patrol arrest authority, name the act Aisha's Law, and to make an appropriation
Sponsors: Representative Boyd and Representative Carruthers

Chairman LaRe, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Leland, and members of the Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 3, legislation that would amend sections 109.744, 109.803, 2903.01, 2919.25, 2919.27, 2929.12, 2929.13, 2929.14, 2929.22, 2935.03, 2935.032, 2937.23 and 3113.31; to amend, for the purpose of adopting a new section number as indicated in parentheses, section 2935.033 (2935.034); and to enact new section 2935.033 and section 2919.261 of the Revised Code to make changes to civil and criminal law regarding domestic violence, to address State Highway Patrol arrest authority, to name the act Aisha's Law, and to make an appropriation.

Strangulation has been identified as one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence and the strongest indicator of future domestic violence fatalities. According to the Training Institute on Strangulation, the presence of strangulation increases the chance of becoming a homicide victim by 800 percent. Additionally, a previous history of strangulation by a partner increases the odds by 700 percent of becoming a victim of an attempted homicide. The statistics are shocking and undeniable. The Ohio House must act to pass HB3 to protect survivors and victims of this violent crime and to hold perpetrators of strangulation accountable for their abuse.

As the Director of Services at the Rape Crisis Center of Summit and Medina Counties and a licensed professional clinical counselor, I have witnessed the devastating impacts of strangulation in numerous survivors. For those who survived these violent attacks, the impacts of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder severely impact their daily functioning, mental health and emotional well-being. Additionally, survivors of strangulation are at risk for long-term brain injuries that have devastating consequences on their lives. As we know, many more victims have died due to strangulation by a partner. A few seconds can be the difference between life and death. Perpetrators quite literally hold the lives of their victims in their hands. Ohio must act the pass this legislation to reduce domestic violence related homicides. Ohio is one of the last two states to pass legislation that addresses strangulation as a felony offense and this leaves countless victims of domestic violence at risk of severe injury and, in the worst cases, of homicide.

To further emphasize the severity of strangulation, please consider the following statistics provided by domestic violence organizations and the Strangulation Institute:

- 1 in 4 women will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime. Of women at high risk, up to 68% will experience near-fatal strangulation by their partner.
- In 2020, 58% of Ohio's domestic violence programs noted an increase in the severity of violence and injuries reported, including an alarming increase in strangulation.
- 43% of women murdered in domestic assaults and 45% of victims of attempted murder had been strangled by their partner in the previous year.
- 38% of victims report losing consciousness.
- 35% who are strangled also experience sexual assault.
- 70% of strangled women believe they were going to die.
- Strangulation timeline
 - 7 seconds for unconsciousness to occur
 - 14 seconds for an anoxic seizure

- 15 seconds for loss of bladder control
- 30 seconds for loss of bowel control
- 62-152 seconds for death

I strongly encourage you to support this bill to send the message to perpetrators of this violent crime that Ohio will hold them accountable and strangulation will not be tolerated in the state of Ohio. By passing this bill, Ohio will be saving lives, protecting victims of strangulation, and making our communities safer.

Thank you,

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