

Chairman Brenner, Vice Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Fedor, and Members of the Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committee.

Good afternoon, my name is Siara Akers and I'm here as a proponent for House bill 105. First and foremost I am beyond thankful to be standing here today. Thank you for noticing the importance and urgency in this bill and bringing it for a second hearing so quickly.

When I was in junior high my best friend's dad inappropriately touched me numerous times in many different settings. On the night that stands out to me the most, we had a sleep over and I woke up to her dad, I laid paralyzed in fear. The next morning she went back to my house with me and I told her everything I had been keeping from her. She then confided in me and told me her stories that were similar to mine. She made me swear I wouldn't tell anyone and it would be our secret. I eventually told my parents about a year later, they took it all the way to court but it was dropped with not enough evidence.

He is still living his life roaming around town, in fact I ran into him at our local pumpkin patch last fall while getting pumpkins with my 4 year old. His daughter though, she took her life. She took her life 15 years later in January of 2019 but not after sending me a string of Facebook messages asking me why we didn't tell earlier. I told her we did not know better, we were just kids, we were terrified. She took her life two weeks after those messages and left the weight of the world on my shoulders.

Fast forward two months in March of 2019 I got a phone call that my first grade daughter's gym teacher had inappropriately touched numerous little girls and it was on camera. Within a few weeks I found myself sitting in the same waiting room my parents took me too at the Children's Advocacy Center 15 years earlier while my daughter was the one behind closed doors being questioned.

I knew then something has to change. Eighty-eight girls were groped by this gym teacher while 36 of those times being felony charges. This was not fair, those little girls were manipulated and groomed at 6 and 7 years old just as I was at 13, 14, and 15. I cannot begin to imagine how they felt that young knowing how I felt as a teenager.

This law saves lives and prevents trauma. You passing this this time around can prevent a child from committing suicide 15 years from now because you gave them a voice when they were most vulnerable. Our children deserve to know that they are allowed to say no to teachers, uncles, cousins, mommies and daddies, foster parents, WHOEVER we teach them of authority but touch them in ways they shouldn't. Children should know that secrets should not be kept when it comes to their body safety and they will be protected if they stand up for themselves.

By passing this bill this year YOU can be a part of preventing trauma, suicide, sexual abuse. Please consider passing this bill this year, it has already slipped through the cracks too many times. I have attached many articles links of children coming forward in different states where this law has passed and how many little lives have been saved from the children who had the courage to come forward after learning about body safety.

Thank you so much for your time.

New York principal 2021

Nine children come forward after a Erins law lesson

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/elementary-school-principal-charged-sexually-abusing-9-boys-new-york-n1264245?fbclid=IwAR2QC7i3iht7Tri0ewSdXajsXpJKxXehe6mOpM9OnFBMPrzyIMEEq-3RRXw>

Alabama Man

February 2020

Crossville man charged with sexual abuse of a child after school presentation

https://whnt.com/news/northeast-alabama/crossville-man-charged-with-sexual-abuse-of-a-child/?fbclid=IwAR3oUrgS2zQ_NxZINR3zOYBHsh9J_soXqLgJZuPSGDuitOy6ZAANEoa3-Rc

Nebreska

February 2020

Testimony underway in sexual assault trial after child came forward from a school presentation

https://www.starherald.com/news/local_news/testimony-underway-in-sexual-assault-trial/article_82300808-2e07-5bab-b670-6c5f06ed2a2b.html?fbclid=IwAR2e6JxHk4VRgLR93RAAtQ5JcV2vWKhITM2TmTrRa1SHIrd3wqzFgz_eqQwk

Missouri

January 2020

Missouri man sentence to 30 years for assault after child told a teacher from a school presentation

https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/crime/article239199513.html?fbclid=IwAR2f6n_91ekI8wxY3j5H2q1zmKocjiUjNa-wsgqq4zUAd2046mk3bRT2iAE

Michigan

January 2020

10 years for assaulting a 10 year old.

https://www.thealpennews.com/news/local-news/2020/01/man-gets-10-years-for-assaulting-8-year-old/?fbclid=IwAR0mSiLvTqUzCWsiv0xUbMerBswngU-sOggyShLZ3JImWWeG_72wwbRj0hw

Indiana

December 2019

Man arrested after years of abuse

https://www.14news.com/2019/11/23/affidavit-man-arrested-child-molestation-after-years-abuse/?fbclid=IwAR3wWPvcyYRpExLMmkuzZRHGH-kBZ2OZI_PeLk_yggivv9NsopKB500ibis

Indiana

October 2019

Girl Reported Sexual Abuse After Attending Body Safety Program at school

https://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/girl-reports-sex-abuse-after-attending-body-safety-program-chesterton/article_f0fe800f-65e5-595e-b1be-8fa7559280fe.html?fbclid=IwAR3bGiQNTXctwXizA5uck_y5CbbAFI3d_aBfAVgoKVUq_jlrxCNXY3tinoM

Indiana

October 2019

School Program About Reporting Abuse Leads to Child Molestation Arrest

https://www.courierpress.com/story/news/local/2019/10/29/boonville-man-charged-child-molesting-after-student-tells-teacher/2500763001/?fbclid=IwAR3Q7iK7Mb_EOW8bFCfDz7_GN0rlg6wvU4b9Ys37dsp83ASvanlOndOlnZY

South Carolina

October 2019

School Program on Reporting Abuse Leads to Arrest of Green Sea Man

https://wpde.com/news/local/hcpd-school-lesson-on-abuse-leads-to-arrest-of-green-sea-man?fbclid=IwAR3859cdNQZWU5BdFg7YwC_rBb8Mo199WYT33YE0JBEr4stE1rYI8Na5MrQ

Illinois

October 2019

Former Algonquin Based Teacher Gets 112 Year Sentence for Child Sexual Abuse

https://www.nwherald.com/2019/10/18/former-algonquin-based-school-district-300-teacher-gets-112-year-sentence-for-child-sex-assault/au8n3x3/?utm_medium=NWHFacebook&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR3Mv_23fMvar703Omfagtvg0Vxhl2xqBSLrWkAXiydOTRTe5GyV7J

Pennsylvania

April 2019

School Presentation leads to Arrest of Man Suspected of Child Abuse

https://www.wtae.com/article/school-presentation-leads-to-arrest-of-man-suspected-of-child-abuse/27116733?fbclid=IwAR2ttSJkiJSqV_8fxHjBlpddUzkdeVNjsidUe7MOKGFFAeiGsxb3EbAyvyl

Indiana

January 2019

Anderson Couple Arrested After Body Safety Talk

https://www.heraldbulletin.com/news/local_news/anderson-couple-arrested-after-body-safety-talk-at-apa/article_4c52b042-1b86-11e9-a02e-ef66abb8fba9.html?fbclid=IwAR0SUNFhNN91ERNi47mb0u_Zhc4d4GXoQGkK5DZM4kiAYacwljEhd2vOscg

Oregon

December 2018

After Cop Gives Talk at Portland School Girl Confides she has Been Abused.

<https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2018/12/after-cop-gives-talk-at-portland-school-girl-confides-shes->

[been-raped.html](#)

South Carolina

February 28, 2018

South Carolina man 25 years in prison after 4th grader discloses sexual abuse during presentation

<http://www.wyff4.com/article/sex-offender-told-victims-their-parents-wouldnt-love-them-if-they-reported-abuse-ag-says/18924739>

Maryland

August 2017

Maryland Teacher sentenced to 48 years in prison for molesting several students over 15 years. 12 year old reported abuse during Erin's Law

presentation. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/he-was-warned-about-getting-too-close-to-students-but-this-maryland-teacher-was-allowed-to-stay-in-the-classroom/2017/08/25/5ac2ad76-7bbe-11e7-a669-b400c5c7e1cc_story.html?utm_term=.e491f5634992

Illinois

February 2017

Illinois Police arrested 54-year-old Timothy Zielinski. They say he sexually abused a family member who came forward about her abuse, just hours after going through Erin's

Law. <http://www.wifr.com/content/news/Body-safety-classes-helping-to-change-lives-414126323.html>

South Carolina

July 2017

Hilton Man Accused of Sexual Conduct with 10 year old.

<http://www.islandpacket.com/news/local/crime/article161764238.html?fbclid=IwAR04ZtW1jFnXKrd8Xf4SoWCKOgnA-NOu2UBujaMgr4kG5sQe0fdaZ0FCLgE>

Virginia

March 2017

Virginia Three adults arrested after school district taught personal body safety.

<http://www.fox5dc.com/news/local-news/elementary-school-sexual-abuse-prevention-program-helps-lead-to-arrest-of-prince-william-county-man>

Virginia

October 2016

Two kids report sexual abuse after viewing educational video in Virginia School

https://wjla.com/news/local/2-kids-report-sexual-abuse-after-viewing-educational-video-in-va-school?fbclid=IwAR01fhQpmqJSeHVLfuoz-LPG_0gC-DjThr4LUdWlZkywAJeiSnEP7rAjSc

Illinois

November 2016

Illinois man held on 2.5 million bond for Arlington Heights man charged with sexual abuse.

<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20160520/news/160529807/>

Wisconsin

November 2016

Former Wisconsin corrections officer accused of assault boy.

Wisconsin man arrested for sexual abuse after boy reported he was abused to teacher after he watched a video on what to do if you are being abused. <http://www.wisn.com/article/former-waukesha-corrections-officer-accused-of-assaulting-boy/6318607>

Illinois

September 2016

Child Reported Abuse After Program at School

http://thetelegraph.com/news/90089/testimony-child-reported-abuse-after-watching-program-at-school?fbclid=IwAROLdlaONt9dZzq_5n8hX71dpT2pngOR4MvKQ8-37kgMZgCnYIVPpsPbZ4

Illinois

August 2016

Lisle man sentenced to 40 years in prison for sexually abusing girlfriend's daughter from age of 3-7yrs old. Girl told her teacher immediately after being taught Erin's

Law. <http://www.fox32chicago.com/news/crime/lisle-man-gets-40-years-for-for-sexually-assaulting-young-girl>

Alabama

May 2015

9-year-old comes forward about sexual abuse after school presentation.

<https://www.waff.com/story/29157044/police-9-year-old-comes-forward-about-sexual-abuse-after-school-presentation/>

South Carolina

January 2014

Lesson on good touch bad touch leads to arrest.

<https://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/class-lesson-good-touch-bad-touch-leads-arrests-article-1.1571452>