

## **AWAITING CRUCIAL VOTE TODAY, ANOTHER CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE SURVIVOR SHARES HER PAINFUL STORY, URGES REFORM BILL PASSAGE**

*As a child, Carolyn Surrick was groomed, raped by teachers; she now fights for justice*

Baltimore, MD (March 10, 2023) – Carolyn Surrick, of Annapolis, Maryland, will never forget what it was like when her school “failed” her, enabling two predator-teachers that groomed and raped her as a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grader. She recently testified on S.B. 0686 before the state Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee about the horrors she endured decades ago at the independent Key School, and in a newly-released survivor-impact video, she details those painful experiences and implores officials, starting with the State Senate committee today, to pass a new law that would finally give Maryland’s childhood sexual abuse survivors, like Carolyn, the right to seek justice.

“You just need to make it possible for us to have our day in court,” she recently told the committee, and in the video, part of the *Survivors Stories* series, shares that as a young girl she was groomed and raped by music and art teachers, and “conditioned” to think that somehow she engaged in acceptable consensual relations. The “moment of truth”, she recalled, is when the realization set in that she was victimized by predators and, “I was sexually abused.”

Currently, people in Maryland who say they were sexually abused as children cannot sue after they reach the age of 38. The Maryland House has approved remedial legislation in recent years that would have lifted that age limit, but it failed in the state Senate.

*Survivors Stories* is a series of short videos presented as a public service by sexual abuse attorneys/advocates from Jenner Law and Grant & Eisenhofer, in conjunction with SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused By Priests). The series premiered just before the state senate hearing on the proposed child victims reform legislation, and prior to the momentous court ruling paving the way for the interim release of the four-year Maryland Office of Attorney General investigation into systemic child sexual abuse within the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

***Survivors Stories*** is part of the wide ranging public information effort that includes an online grassroots petition endorsing passage of the legislation.

David Lorenz, of the state’s chapter of SNAP, hosts the petition campaign, and has been among the most outspoken supporters of the legislation, testifying before both chambers. In a commentary in today’s yesterday’s Baltimore Sun, he wrote, “These survivors — and it is conservatively estimated there are thousands in our state — only ask that the doors of justice remain open so they can file claims and present their case before a judge and jury; nothing in the bill makes *them* the judge and jury.

Attorneys Robert K. Jenner, of Jenner Law, and M. Elizabeth Graham, from co-counsel Grant & Eisenhofer (Wilmington, DE), commended all the participants in the survivor-impact series, the survivor and advocate witnesses who appeared at the hearing, and the continuing counseling and advocacy efforts of the Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center.

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