



April 4, 2024

Chairman Robert E. Craven, Sr.
House of Representatives Committee on Judiciary
House Lounge, State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: 2024- H7629

Dear Chairman Craven:

On behalf of Day One, we are presenting testimony in support of H7629 “An Act Relating to Criminal Procedure – Indictments, Informations and Complaints.” This act would include the offense of second-degree sexual assault among the offenses to which there shall be no statute of limitations and provides for a ten (10) year statute of limitations for third-degree sexual assault.

Currently, the offense of second-degree child molestation sexual assault is already included in the list of offenses with no statute of limitations, therefore the addition of second-degree sexual assault will simply include individuals of all ages who have suffered this crime. The bill also includes third-degree sexual assault to the list of offenses with a ten-year statute of limitations

In 2022, this committee supported the bill including second degree, and was also passed unanimously on the floor. Unfortunately, time ran out on the Senate side so the bill did not move forward. We hope this is the year we can move this bill to passage.

Numerous states have already removed a statute of limitations for second-degree sexual assault criminally. Rhode Island should also remove these limitations. The pain of dealing with a sexual assault case can be extremely overwhelming for victims. Recovering from sexual assault or abuse may take years and there is no timetable for healing, which is why it often takes years for a victim to come forward to report any abuse.

Delayed disclosure is a very real response to trauma. People do not report sexual assault for a variety of reasons. Victims are traumatized from the abuse, incapable of processing what has happened, threatened by the abuser, and possibly dependent on the adults who abused them. Those who do come forward often face scrutiny and are met with disbelief — even more so when a person of influence has committed sexual violence. Removing the statute of limitations would allow many victims to heal and find the courage to come forward and report the abuse.



This legislation, if enacted, will result in more offenders being held accountable for these crimes. Day One strongly supports passing this legislation in Rhode Island to remove the statute of limitations for second-degree sexual assault and increase the statute of limitations for third-degree sexual assault.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Peg Langhammer'.

Peg Langhammer
Executive Director, Day One