

# **Report of the Statutes of Limitations Regarding Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Assault Task Force**

**Submitted pursuant to Subsection (g) of Section 14 of Public Act No. 19-16**  
*An Act Combatting Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment*

**January 13, 2020**

**Chair:**  
**State Senator Mae Flexer**

**Task Force Charge:**

Section 14 of Public Act No. 19-16 establishes an eight-member task force to study whether the statutes of limitations to recover damages for personal injury to minors and adults caused by sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or sexual assault should be amended. The task force shall examine the applicable statutes of limitations in this state & that of other states. Such examination shall include review of reviving claims that are otherwise time barred. Not later than January 15, 2020, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. Senator Flexer believed that this report was submitted by staff on January 13, 2020.

**Task Force Meetings:**

Task Force held four meetings: September 24, December 11, December 17, 2019 and January 7, 2020. The December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting included a presentation from Professor Marci Hamilton, CEO of Child USA, on highlights from the "Child Sex Abuse Statutes of Limitation Reform from January 2002 to December 2019". The December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting included an invited public hearing.

**The Task Force finds that:**

There is a current need to address Connecticut's statute of limitations for civil sexual assault cases.

**Accordingly, the Task Force unanimously recommends that:**

The General Assembly eliminate the statute of limitations for civil claims arising from child sexual abuse and revive all time barred claims.

**Task Force Vote Tally: January 7, 2020**

Task Force Members	Yea	Nay	Absent	Abstain
<b>Chair: Senator Mae Flexer</b>	X			
<b>Judge Barbara N. Bellis</b>				X
<b>Lynn Laperle</b>	X			
<b>Attny. Douglas P. Mahoney</b>	X			
<b>Attny. Ernest Mattei</b>			X	
<b>Lucy Nolan</b>	X			
<b>Attny. Angelica Papastavros</b>	X			
<b>Attny. Paul Slager</b>	X			

**I. Summary on the Effects of Trauma from Lucy Nolan, Director of Policy and Public Relations at the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, January 13, 2020**

Children are three times more likely to be victims of rape than adults and the rapist are not strangers. Most children are sexual abused by people that they and their family trust and it only magnifies the shame, self-blame, fear and/ isolation that impedes disclosure by victims. Additionally, because the predator may be seen as a good person, they may not be believed that this person could do that to this child, it goes against our worldview of who we trust and believe.

Sexual abusers groom their victims and those around their victims. The six stages of grooming (isolating the victim, gaining the victims trust, filling a need, isolating the child, sexualizing the relationship, and maintaining control) leaves childhood victims to question themselves, their responsibility in the act and the isolation creates a perception that there no place for the victim to go for help.

The Task Force heard testimony from many people who spoke about the fear, shame, isolation and stupidity they felt because they allowed this to happen to them. When the sexual abuse is done by a trusted adult it may be hard for the child victim to view the perpetrator in a negative light and leaving them incapable of seeing what happened to them as not their fault. For some they didn't realize the sexual abuse happened to anyone else and only once they did, they felt safe to disclose the abuse.

Denial and repression of sexual abuse is believed by some to be a long-term effect of childhood sexual abuse. Symptoms may include experiencing amnesia concerning parts of their childhood, negating the effects and impact of sexual abuse, and feeling that they should forget about the abuse.

Most of the victims missed the statute of limitation deadlines in our state because of the disclosure delay that is common among child sex abuse victims. Only 25-33% of victims disclose in childhood, and 33%-77% disclose in adulthood, with studies finding age 48 is the median and age 52 as the average age of disclosure. As Profession Marci Hamilton of ChildUSA states "The reasons for delay are specific to each individual, but often involve disabilities that result for the sex abuse (e.g., depression, PTSD, substance abuse alcoholism, and physical ailments) and the large power differential between the child victim and the adult perpetrator, as well as the power dynamics of the institution.

Testimony before the Task Force stated, "I have lived with the pain, anguish, shame and post-traumatic effects of abuse for over 45 years. Through the Archdiocese 2019 disclosure of Fr. Pauls' abuse and criminality, I realized I was not alone – Fr. Paul victimized other children. The isolation I felt and fear of not being believed have lessened. I can no speak knowing I am not alone and not delusional or crazy in the eyes of my family, friends and others."

**II. Submission from Professor Marci Hamilton, CEO of Child USA at the December 11, 2019 meeting.**

Please view the report titled "Child Sex Abuse Statutes of Limitation Reform from January 2002 to December 2019" at this link:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a120b962aeba581dd692cd4/t/5e05104880f81f1fddb013c5/1577390160706/2019+SOL+Report+2019.12.26.pdf>

### **III. Submitted Invited Public Testimony from the December 17, 2019 Meeting**

#### **Lori Temple, Co-Leader, Survivors Network for those Abused by Priests (SNAP)**

#### **Statutes of Limitations Regarding Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Assault Task Force: Lori Temple**

**December 17, 2019**

Good afternoon, my name is Lori Temple, and I am from Manchester. Thank you for allowing me to speak before the Task Force today. I support the elimination of the civil statute of limitations for sexual assault, and if it is not retroactive, allow a look back period for those of us who have been locked out of the process.

Earlier this year there was an article in the Hartford Courant where the Archdiocese of Hartford released a list of priests who had been credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors. The article triggered deeply buried memories of sexual abuse I endured by a priest in East Hartford which started when I was just 8 years old. I am 59 years old and outside of the current statute of limitations so there is nothing I can do to hold the Archdiocese legally accountable for the trauma inflicted on me. My innocence was stolen from me when I was 8. For those of you who have children, let that number sit with you for a minute.

I reached out to the Archdiocese looking for assistance. Instead, I was revictimized by their callous and cold response to my story. It took months and months from my initial contact to them for them to release information I had requested from them about the priest – who they take no responsibility for. They offered me pastoral counseling through the Archdiocese which I refused, but beyond that, they ignored emails and phone calls from me. Keep in mind, this is when my abuse memories were first surfacing, and it was a very raw time. I received no compassion from them. The Archdiocese felt they had repaid for their sins by putting this information out but refused to do anything about the harm they caused. This is why they have to be held accountable and using civil suits is one way to create accountability rather than hide behind the law.

My life has been permanently altered by the abuse inflicted upon me. From an early age I've had to go into survival mode and bury those experiences. I've spent many years crowding out the internal pain which manifested in unhealthy ways and has affected my personal relationships, finances and health my entire life. While I haven't added up the financial costs, I know it is much more than had I not had to hide from this abuse for the last 50 years.

I'm here before you to ask you – why should my memories, my story, my pain, be any less relevant than someone who is 51, 42 or 35 or 29 years old? How can an arbitrary age be placed on when a mind remembers something? Anyone who understands PTSD understands that different things trigger memories for people and there is no way to put a time cap on that. The priest that abused me was not on that list. Why don't I count?

I was here last week when Professor Hamilton spoke to you. I was struck by the questions and concerns raised about how changing the statute of limitations would affect institutions financially. I want to be clear, the financial stability of an institution that protected predators does not need the state's assistance allowing

them to get away with sexual abuse, while those of us who are the victims of both the predator and the institution, in this case the church, need what the state offers them by limiting our access to civil courts.

Eliminating the civil statute of limitations and creating a look back period would give me and others who are left without legal options the chance to heal while protecting others from future sexual abuse by bringing it out in the open. Eliminating the civil statute of limitations and creating a look back period can help us deal with the shame we carry and allow us the financial ability to recoup what we've lost by being a victim of these institutions and finally, to validate that our lives are just as important as everyone else's. Thank you.

**Beth McCabe, Co-Leader, Survivors Network for those Abused by Priests (SNAP)**

**Statutes of Limitations Regarding Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Assault Task Force: Testimony of Beth McCabe**

**December 17, 2019**

Good afternoon, my name is Beth McCabe, and I am from Canton. Thank you for allowing me to speak before the Task Force today. I am here to show my support for the elimination of the civil statute of limitations for crimes of sexual assault, and the creation of a "window" or look back.

I am a survivor of child sexual abuse by a priest when I was 10-13 years old. Due to the push for SOL reform in New York State I am finally able to seek justice after 50 years. It is hard to put in words what it means for the Rockville Centre Diocese to accept responsibility for what happened to me. The journey for healing and justice was the most difficult journey of my life as I confronted feelings of shame, anger and that somehow it was my fault. It has effected every part of my life yet I consider myself one of the lucky ones and I'm committed to helping other survivors and reforming SOL.

Over the last 17 years I have been a co-leader of Connecticut SNAP [Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests] and have responded to calls from the 211 help line and have led support groups. I have worked with hundreds of survivors over that time. The trauma resulting from child sexual abuse includes PTSD, depression and substance abuse. Many victims have not been able to bear the pain and have committed suicide.

Recently two survivors come to mind one a successful restaurant owner who had an emotional breakdown trying to deal with his abuse and another survivor who sought help from the Catholic Church only to be told that she was possessed. Both of these survivors are over the age to bring a civil suit forward.

Unfortunately according to research the average age a survivor comes forward is 52 and 25-33% of cases are never reported. I have been asked "why didn't you come forward earlier?" I wasn't ready to deal with the trauma and didn't think anyone would believe me. Or others may say, "It happened a long time ago why can't you just get over it." The truth is you never get over it. The pain and shame eats at you and never goes away. As one survivor said recently said "it will kill you if you don't deal with it". Critics will say that memories fade. To that I would say that a victim never forgets. The smells, what the perpetrator said or how they felt will never go away.

Connecticut needs to be a leader in protecting children. Children don't have a vote but we, as adults, need to protect our children from predators. Current law protects predators who are continuing to assault children. Perpetrators may have 150 victims and they don't stop assaulting children even as they age. Research shows that the average lifetime cost of child maltreatment is \$830,928 per victim. Many victims may be on Medicaid. In settlements that are reached in these cases, a "Medicaid lien" is place on the settlement funds for the payments to applied to health problems generated by the abuse. Enactment of the "window" portion of the bill will lead to reimbursement of CT Medicaid for at least \$105,000,000.

Cure the injustice of unfair SOL 1.) Identify hidden predators. 2.) Shift the cost of abuse from victim and taxpayers to those that caused it. 3.) Educate the public and prevent future abuse. I urge you to push for the elimination of the SOL for sexual abuse and the creation of a window.

Thank you.

*Beth McCabe*





The Sean P. McIlmail Statute  
of Limitations Research  
Institute at CHILD USA

**The Child Victims Act, a Bill to Revive Child Sex Abuse Civil Statutes of Limitations and to Extend the Civil and Criminal Statutes of Limitations**

**Purpose:** Recently, the state of Connecticut joined the growing movement of extending its child sex abuse statutes of limitations (“SOLs”). This year, Connecticut enacted a revival law, extending the SOL to age 51 (age of majority, 21, plus 30 years). This extension is prospective, meaning it only applies to actions based on conduct occurring after October 1, 2019, but it applies to non-minors ages 18, 19, and 20 too. Connecticut stands alongside Massachusetts and Rhode Island in enacting an age-limit for the revival of expired civil SOLs.

With many Connecticut victims unable to obtain justice, most of Connecticut’s perpetrators are hidden and the victims, who are predisposed to a greater incidence of depression, PTSD, substance abuse, alcoholism, and suicide, among many other health impacts, are bearing the cost of the abuse by themselves. Because of the greater incidence of medical and psychological health problems and the negative impact on achievement and success, child sex abuse victims are disproportionately in need of medical care and other government support as compared to the general population. Historically, Connecticut has protected institutions and perpetrators through short SOLs while the victims have been left to bear all of the costs of the abuse.

Due to the myriad of problems child sex abuse can generate, many victims land in precarious situations. As a result, they may be on Medicaid and need other state support including food and shelter assistance, addiction treatment, and job training or support. Approximately 1/3 of child sex abuse victims develop PTSD alone.

For those victims dependent on Medicaid and other state aid, taxpayers are paying for the costs of the abuse when the perpetrators and enabling institutions are protected by expired SOLs. Revival laws cure the injustice of SOLs that keep the vast majority of victims from justice, and it shifts the costs of the abuse from the victims and the taxpayers to the ones who caused it.

The purpose of SOL reform is to finally hand justice to these victims. The added benefit is that it will shift the cost of the abuse away from the victims and the taxpayers to the abuser and/or the institution that created the conditions of abuse. It will also identify hidden child sexual predators and put more perpetrators in jail. Since compulsive pedophiles may abuse over 100 victims over a lifetime, increased identification and prosecution of molesters will result in fewer Connecticut children sexually abused, which is a savings in human suffering and state cost.



### **Summary of Provisions and Statement in Support**

The extension of SOLs increases justice for victims of child sex abuse by reviving expired civil claims. Opening the courthouse door has three benefits:

- for those victims whose SOL had expired, the window makes it possible to sue the individuals and organizations that made the abuse possible and, therefore, mitigate the steep cost of abuse.
- for those victims whose civil SOL has not yet expired, the extension gives them more time to sue for damages the perpetrator and those who created the conditions for the abuse. Victims typically also ask for non-monetary awards in the form of better procedures for the institution that caused their abuse; they suffer from survivor's guilt and need the hope that no more children will be sexually abused the way they were.
- for those victims whose criminal SOL has not yet expired, the extension gives them more time to press charges against the perpetrator according to when they are ready. This longer time period is deeply important to the majority of victims, who are sexually abused in the family or by a close family associate and therefore face high barriers to coming forward.

**Medicaid Savings:** As explained above, victims are often on Medicaid. Approximately 22% of Connecticut residents are on Medicaid or CHIP, and it is likely that sex abuse survivors disproportionately receive support due to the crippling effect of the trauma. In the settlements that are reached in these cases, a "Medicaid lien" is placed on the settlement funds for the payments applied to health problems generated by the abuse.

Due to the myriad of problems child sex abuse can generate, many victims land in precarious situations. As a result, they may be on Medicaid and need other state support including food and shelter assistance, addiction treatment, and job training or support. Approximately 1/3 of child sex abuse victims develop PTSD alone.

The costs of sex abuse are staggering. It is widely agreed that 20-25% of children are sexually abused by the age of 18. Numerous, scholarly studies have concluded that the cost of nonfatal child abuse over a lifetime is approximately \$210,000.00.<sup>1</sup> It is unfair for the victims and taxpayers to be the only ones who bear the burden; the CVA levels the playing field by imposing liability on the ones who caused the abuse and alleviating the burdens on the victims and taxpayers.

Enactment of the "window" portion of this bill alone will lead to reimbursement of CT Medicaid for at least \$105,000,000 when Medicaid liens are paid out of settlements.<sup>2</sup> In Minnesota approximately 1,000 victims filed civil suits. CT's population is just under two thirds of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3776454/>.

<sup>2</sup> Using the national average of \$350,000 received in settlements for child sexual abuse. Medicaid often accounts for roughly half of the settlement.

Minnesota's population. Therefore, one could expect over 600 victims to take advantage of this opportunity for justice.

If there are 600 victims in CT and we multiply the cost of abuse over a lifetime \$830,000 = \$498,000,000 in savings for each compulsive pedophile arrested.

**Opioid Crisis Savings:** By identifying predators, preventing sex abuse, and providing justice and the financial means for treatment, SOL reform contributes to ending the opioid crisis. Traumatic, adverse childhood experiences increase the likelihood of opioid addiction and greater struggles with such addiction. Preventing childhood trauma through justice for the victims and perpetrator identification are keys to ameliorating the crisis.

There is a correlation between trauma exposure and substance abuse. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, "[i]n the National Survey of Adolescents, teens who had experienced physical or sexual abuse/assault were three times more likely to report past or current substance abuse than those without a history of trauma. In surveys of adolescents receiving treatment for substance abuse, more than 70% of patients had a history of trauma exposure."

Victims of child sex abuse have a significantly higher risk of PTSD, who in turn have a greater risk of substantive abuse. "Th[e] correlation [between trauma and substance abuse] is particularly strong for adolescents with PTSD. Studies indicate that up to 59% of young people with PTSD subsequently develop substance abuse problems."<sup>3</sup>

One of the reasons that children turn to drugs and alcohol is to engage in self-medication against their pain. SOL reform hands victims more resources to obtain the treatment they need to deal with the pain in the healthiest way, discloses the hidden predators so that there are fewer victims in the future, and replaces isolation with validation.

**Summary:** SOL reform will result in millions in reimbursement of Medicaid funds previously paid to child sex abuse victims. It would also reduce the cost to the state of Connecticut in the future, because more victims would be able to sue rather than being relegated solely to the state for support when the ravages of child sex abuse affect their lives in the form of depression, PTSD, substance abuse, and other problems.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/making-connection-trauma-and-substance-abuse>

**Jeremy & Kerry Visone, Cromwell, CT**

**Testimony for Kerry and Jeremy Visone before the Statutes of Limitations Regarding Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Assault Task Force: December 17, 2019**

Senator Flexer and members of the Task Force, I thank you for providing a forum to hear from victims and their supporters. I am Jeremy Visone, and I will be speaking on behalf of my wife, Kerry Visone, and myself. We are in favor of a look-back window for civil claims for past cases of sexual assault. First, I will share testimony from my wife, Kerry: Senator Flexer and members of the Taskforce, my name is Kerry Visone, and I live in Cromwell, Connecticut. I have asked my husband, Jeremy Visone, to read my testimony to you, as I cannot attend due to work obligations. I support proposed statutory changes that would allow past victims of sexual assault, like me, to seek justice from perpetrators of crimes that are otherwise time barred. In 1995, I was raped by an individual known to me between my freshman and sophomore years of college. At the time, as teenager, I was not able to process what had happened to me in the immediate aftermath of the rape, and I, like so many other victims, chose to push the painful memory deep into my brain. I did share my secret with one friend the day after it happened, but I made her promise never to tell anyone, and she, also a teenager, kept this secret to herself, too. In 2017, at the height of the “#MeToo movement, I saw some posts by women on Facebook, and I was overcome with an intense anxious feeling that I likened to being pulled over. My heart was racing, and I felt compelled to disclose my painful secret to my husband.

Over the years, the effects of being raped manifested in different ways. I have suffered from panic attacks, extreme anxiety, depression, nightmares, anger management issues, to name a few effects. After disclosing to my husband two years ago, he commented that many of these challenges I had faced over the years now made sense to him. He wondered why I had never told anyone. I did not think anyone would believe me. I rationalized that what happened to me was somehow my fault. I thought people would question my reputation. I knew social stigma would work against me. But, most of all, I was ashamed. I was so ashamed of what had happened. I came to learn, as I began to disclose to others and attend therapy, that these were all normal feelings for survivors of rape. I also learned that my need for time to process what happened to me and develop the courage to tell others my story was also typical. This is why I ask you to support a means to help victims like me, who needed decades prior to coming forward, seek justice. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Those were my wife’s words. Now, I will add some of my own. To introduce myself, I am Jeremy Visone, proud husband of Kerry Visone, of Cromwell, Connecticut. For the past 2+ years, I have been an advocate for eliminating the statute of limitations for sexual assault crimes and eliminating any potential barriers for victims to seek justice, including advocating for raising the age of “majority” from 18 to 21 (or higher), since many women are victimized during these formative years, and their ability to comprehend and address what has happened to them is less developed than that of an older individual. I have had an op-ed published in the Hartford Courant, and I have testified before the Judiciary Committee for the past two years. In addition, I was a member of the Central Connecticut State University Presidential Task Force on Sexual Misconduct, Bullying and Campus Climate.

First, as a supporter of a survivor, I can speak, firsthand, to the effects of trauma on her. As she stated, she has suffered from the effects of being traumatized in many ways, and she outlined those for you. I also saw her question her own self-worth. When I suggested she get help and seek justice, she replied, “But who am I? I am nobody.” This was one of the saddest moments for me, when I realized that this individual, this selfish individual, had significantly damaged my wife’s self-esteem. Her ability to connect, emotionally, has been damaged greatly as well. Though I had hoped to hold this perpetrator accountable in some way --

I researched a great deal about this-- it has come to this last option and hope: civil accountability. Our society benefits when perpetrators of heinous crimes are held accountable for their actions. My wife, and those around her, have suffered long enough, while the perpetrator who harmed her went on to live a life without care or worry for the damage caused. It is disappointing to think that our laws support this individual's comfort more than my wife's.

As I researched what we could do to try to hold this individual accountable, we found little recourse. As a matter of fact, we were often told that, by talking about what happened to my wife, we might even be exposing ourselves to civil liability. Imagine that: a victim, who was so horribly wronged, is treated in our society as a perpetrator, for merely calling out someone who harmed her. To me, this is backward, archaic, and unjust. What we ask you to consider would give victims, like my wife, a safe space to call out those who have harmed them. The courtroom is the proper place to bring forth allegations, not the public sphere, where the court of public opinion seems to bow to the person who shouts the loudest or who has the most means. We seek justice here. And, as Dr. Martin Luther King famously reminded us, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Let us give the silenced a voice and pathway to justice.

We are at a critical moment, when we are literally surrounded by a tidal wave of states enacting the exact type of legislation we are suggesting. We humbly ask you to help us to right a wrong that has gone unaddressed for 24 years. My wife has suffered long enough. It is time that the perpetrator of this horrific crime against her should share in the burden and weight of this selfish action. Thank you all for your dedication to this Task Force work and consideration.

**Statutes of Limitations Regarding Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation  
and Sexual Assault Task Force**

Testimony of Laurie Guay  
December 17, 2019

Good afternoon, my name is Laurie Guay, and I am from Thompson. Thank you for allowing me to speak before the Task Force today. I am here to show my support for the eliminations of the civil statute of limitations for crimes of sexual assault, and if it is not retroactive, a look back period.

**My Story**

***I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse from three men. All of whom were married with families/children and who were all very familiar to me.***

***My father's best friend*** was the first to sexually abuse me. He was someone who came to the house on a regular basis with and without his wife. It started "innocent" enough, in a joking way, of him offering to wash my back every time I took a bath when he was there. Then there was the tickling which would always result with him grabbing me in any and all private areas he could. All this was done in front of my parents with never a discouraging word uttered. As I got older, he would purposely stop at the house when he knew I would be alone. If I heard him, I would run to make sure all the doors were locked and hide under my bed while he would look for me through the windows and doors. The entire time he searched for me, he would insist I let him in because he knew I was there. I would often stay hidden for long periods of time, even when I knew he had left, just in case he came back.

***My maternal grandfather*** was next to sexually abuse me. One day, he began touching me in my private areas and forced me to touch him back while sitting at the kitchen table with my brother and sister sat across from us. I was too petrified to move and too scared that they would see what was happening to me if I did. Later, he proceeded to come to me in the evening after everyone was asleep. The next morning when I brought it up to my parents, I was told it was just a dream and to forget about it. I knew it wasn't, but every time I insisted, I was told it was my imagination and to drop the subject.

The last and worst of the sexual abuse came at the hands of ***my father***. Most of the occurrences were in the evening after everyone had gone to bed. My sister and I shared a room, but this didn't deter him in any way. Because of this, I would sleep on the far side of my bed as close to the wall as possible with all my stuffed animals piled behind me for protection. I sleep on my stomach and would tuck my hands under me or between the mattress and box spring. I would force myself to stay awake listening for the footsteps and door to open while desperately trying to pretend I was in a sound sleep. When he would finally go to bed was the only time I would allow myself to sleep. He would also sexually abuse me during the day when I was sent by my mother to "work" for him. And, then other times, I would find him looking in the bathroom window when I finished showering.

**There is No Past for Me, My Past Is My Present**

- ***Biggest fear: being watched*** - I am petrified to look wake up and find someone watching me sleep.

***Issues with Sleeping*** - To this day, I always sleep on my stomach with my hands tucked under me. I can't fall asleep unless my back is to the door and I'm as close to the wall as possible. All blankets must be tucked in around me like a cocoon, even in the summer heat. Sleeping on my back is infrequent because it leaves feeling me too exposed.

- ***Issues with Building a Home*** - I insisted it be two stories with ***all the bedrooms and bathrooms upstairs***. In this way, I would never have to worry about anyone standing in front of the windows looking in.

***Bedroom doors always have to be left open when sleeping.*** I never closed my children's doors or ours.

***I don't use blinds, shades or heavy draperies*** in my windows. I don't like the darkness or what the coverings can hide - I want everything in the open.

***My shower curtains cannot be solid colors.*** I have to be able to see if anyone comes in the bathroom while I'm in the shower. If someone enters, I want to know it immediately. I never want to open my shower curtain and be surprised by a face.

I still look for the perfect ***hiding spots***. I have one in my home. I periodically review my spot to see if it's still the best place to be. When I housesit for friends, as I am performing my initial house-check, I look for a safe zone.

- ***Issues with Trusting Others*** - Not only do I distrust them, but I will constantly wonder what they are hiding or what they are really after. My internal warning bells will automatically start going off and I will tend to assume whatever you are hiding, is bad. I tend to watch eyes, hands and overall body language and listen to tones of voice for signs.
- ***Issues with Personal Space*** - I don't like people touching me for no reason or getting too close to my face. It has made it difficult for me to show affection toward people I really care about including my children, grandchildren and even my husband at times. When and if someone gives me a hug, I am always the first to pull away.

The biggest issue is unfortunately with my immediate family, especially my son and daughter. It was a little easier with my grandchildren, but I find that as they are getting older, it is becoming harder and harder. It's not that I don't love them, because I do with every ounce of my being and it fills me with great sadness when I think about how hard it is for me to give my family something as simple as a hug. It is easier for me to clean a nasty toilet than to give either one of my children a hug. I am fortunate that my family understands my situation, but it doesn't in any way diminish my constant feelings of sadness and guilt. In my heart I want be able to do this as freely as I see others do, but I can't seem get beyond the wall I have built around me.

- **Issues with Triggers** - Once in a while there will be an occurrence that will set me off for as much as a day or two. The trigger could be something as simple as a scene from a movie, a song, or something someone said. The "forgotten" memory will sneak out of its' hiding place and leave me a shaking, sick mess.
- **Emotional and Medical Issues** – Feeling unworthy, suffering from depression, feeling guilty for not giving my family a better life - especially the girls, weight issues – is a protective barrier – no one will want me – self-sabotage, and other medical issues due to weight.

I couldn't afford to get the help I needed. My insurance limited Mental Health visits and I saved them for my children. We couldn't afford more co-pays and out of pocket expenses. I was working multiple jobs just to make ends meet and we just didn't have it.

### **Why I Didn't and Couldn't Tell**

There are many reasons I never said anything with the first being **shame**. I felt **dirty**. I felt the friend's wife and my step-grandmother could just see through me and see what a disgusting person I was inside.

**Guilt** goes hand and hand with the shame. You feel like you are taking something away from the wives and families of these men. These men are cheating on their wives with you. **Adultery was a "sin"** which was pounded into you from an early age by the church.

Then you have the **embarrassment** of it all. How could I possibly have let this happen? I was only around 10 years old when all of this started, but I felt **ignorant and stupid** for not knowing how to stop any of it and so it continued.

**Fear** - I dreaded what would happen if I told someone and my father found out. He had violent tendencies and guns. It scared me to death to even remotely think about telling anyone. I knew if I did, it would get back to him. He was friends with many of the local and state policemen. They all knew me to the point where they would let him know if they saw me downtown.

**Isolation** - I knew I was the only one experiencing anything like this. My friends never talked about anything remotely like this, but then who would at 10 years old. Then when you tie this feeling in with the others, it makes you feel that much more alone.

When I am asked why I never came forward sooner, my first answer is always, **"Who would I tell?" My father? Or, my mother who was an alcoholic and more than likely a victim herself?** My mother knew, or at least suspected, and never did anything to protect us. Her way of dealing was to blame me for her failing marriage and have another drink or two or three.

**The one time I tried to tell a friend** in the same grade as me, I was told I was just spoiled, because I had everything. Try to tell another friend? Not on your life - more embarrassment.



### Why I Finally Told

I know that many people wonder why I never came forward until I was **35. It took me 25 years to be able to say anything out loud.**

**In 1994, I received a call from my sister letting me know my father was being accused of molesting his ex-girlfriend's granddaughter.** According to my father, the girl had mental issues and was fixated on him for some reason. I remember my stomach falling to the floor because I knew he was guilty and I told my sister so.

**This was the first time I realized I was not the only one.** My sister, all our babysitters, my friends, and many others fell victim to him. All these little bits of stories and innuendos growing up now fell into place - things that didn't make sense at the time because I was too young. I made calls to family, friends and ex-friends. It amazed me how many people knew and suspected what he was doing and just did nothing. It made me sick.

**If it were not for this happening to another child, I'm not sure I would have ever said anything when I did because I just wanted to keep the shame locked away.**

### Why do Victims/Survivors Need More Time?

- **Fear of Telling Strangers - Going to the State Police was the hardest thing I ever had to do. The thought of telling something so embarrassing to complete strangers was and still is difficult. Plus, my father knew a lot of the state troopers**
- **Fear of the Predator Finding Out - My father's reaction was "How could I do this to him"? and then said "We'll talk later".** He would call me at work about this. Every night for weeks, I expected him to show up at my home with a gun while my husband was at work. Every noise outside would make me jump and feel sick, because I knew he was watching me. I was constantly wondering when he was going to show up. Here was the fear and isolation I lived with, all over again. **Who was going to keep me safe?**
- **Fear of Family/Friends Reactions** - Some members wanted to know how I could do this to family. My brother told me not to dwell on it and to just go about my business like it never happened. And besides, "Dad said he never did anything wrong".

**Unfortunately, the family is split now and there are friends on both sides of the fence. Some stand up for my father because he is a "good guy" and others know who he really is.**

### Why do Victims/Survivors Need Support?

**I couldn't afford to get the help I needed and I am paying the price for that every day as I tried to handle it all myself. My father is living his life as if nothing ever happened due to the Statutes of Limitations while my life has been forever altered by him. Not one day goes by that I don't struggle with memories, triggers, depression, and feelings of guilt and unworthiness.**

**People say that what happened to you is in the past so I should be able to let it go, but it will never be in the past for me. My past is engrained in my everyday reality. My past is my present.**

## **John Timothy McGuire**

I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to address the task force today.

“Why did we wait so long to say something” is a good question. Some clergy abuse victims sit diminished, violated and unable to speak of it, ever. Others, after going directly to the Bishops with complaints, found the Bishops were helping the rapists. This is when clergy victims are violated for a second time.

Most all of us suffer from PTSD. It’s not just a bunch of letters. It controls our lives. Symptoms overlap and conjoin. Damage control is our life. It goes with us to the store, to the bathroom, and it’s here now. I can actually show you the physical effects, if that helps.

It’s when we realize we can’t “control” our PTSD, that we speak. We don’t know there’s a cut-off date until it’s too late.

Roman Catholic Church lobbyist Mark Healy has stated that the church feels the current SOL is “equitable”. In order for it to BE equitable, the victims would have to agree with Mr.Healy’s client. Clergy abuse victims don’t agree with him, or the church he represents which, by the way, identifies their pedophiles by how many times they abuse, not IF they abuse.

What priests do in their stone buildings is up to them, but when it affects society’s vulnerable it’s up to you.

Stop the Roman Catholic Church from lobbying their way out of these rape accusations and subsequent cover-ups. The church has spent almost a million dollars, lobbying against us. This task force is all we have.

Laws are supposed to establish acceptable societal norms. It can’t be acceptable for Connecticut laws to allow hundreds of sexual assault victims to be denied justice, while scores of rapists walk free.

Level the playing field and let the Roman Catholic Church stand accused. Elapsed time is a hardship for both the accuser and the accused. The church has no disadvantage here, other than answering for its behavior.

The victims I speak for, here today are decent people. Those who molested them or hide knowledge of their molestations are not decent people.

There shouldn’t be an expiration date on a civil and decent response to sexual assault allegations.

We ask for a law to eliminate the civil SOL on sexual assault, and a law to provide a look-back window for all victims of sexual assault who were barred from justice by the current SOL.

John Timothy McGuire

CT Clergy Abuse Survivor

## Michael

To: The Members of the Connecticut Legislative Task Force regarding Sexual Abuse, etc.  
Fr: An Older Abuse Survivor Who Seeks Justice  
Date: January, 2020

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Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to submit this written statement for inclusion in the record of this Task Force's proceedings.

My name is Michael, I will soon turn 59 and am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse perpetrated against me multiple times by a Hartford Archdiocesan priest. His name was Fr. Raymond Paul and at the time he was assigned by the Archdiocese to serve as Chaplain at St. Mary's Hospital in Waterbury. For many deeply personal and painful reasons including shame, fear, guilt and torment, I have kept the abuse a secret until last year. Seeing Fr. Paul's name on the February, 2019 Hartford Archdiocese's list of accused priests caused me instant flashbacks to the abuse.

### The Abuse

In 1973 when I was 12 years old, I slipped and fell on a wet floor in "Pick Kwic," (now "IGA"), a local grocery store located on Rt. 69 in Wolcott, Connecticut, not far from my home. I fell on my back and injured my spine. I was brought to St. Mary's hospital for treatment and admitted into the children's ward located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. During this admission, I spent several days in the hospital. Several months later, I was re-admitted to St. Mary's to undergo a myelogram.

While an in-patient at St. Mary's, I was sexually abused and raped by Fr. Raymond Paul, the hospital Chaplain. The abuse/molestation occurred several times in the children's ward. Fr. Paul would enter my hospital room, telling the nurses he would be hearing my confession. After entering my room, he would pull the privacy curtain around my bed. The sexual abuse included Fr. Paul's exposing himself and then undressing, fondling, masturbating and anally penetrating me. Fr. Paul forced me to masturbate him until he ejaculated. Some of the worst abuse occurred when I was admitted to St. Mary's a second time to undergo a myelogram. The procedure required me to be restrained in my bed, lying face-up. Because I was restrained, Fr. Paul performed oral sex on me and then forced me to perform oral sex on him until he ejaculated into my mouth.

### **Confronting it Impact**

With the encouragement of my therapist, I am now coming forward with the hope that doing so will help others to do the same. I have lived with the pain, anguish, shame and post-traumatic effects of the abuse for over 45 years. Through the Archdiocese's 2019 disclosure of Fr. Paul's abuse and criminality, I realized I was not alone – Fr. Paul had victimized other children. The isolation I felt and fear of not being believed have lessened. I can now speak knowing I'm not alone and not delusional or crazy in the eyes of my family, friends and others.

Now that I have mustered the courage to come forward, I'm told that because so much time has passed, the statute of limitations for my claims has expired. That seems so unfair to older victims of abuse like me. How is it fair that the Archdiocese (and St Mary's) can be rewarded like this for covering-up Fr. Paul's criminality? Where is the justice in that? There is none. And there is none for those whose abuse may have been prevented if the Archdiocese had not engaged in such a methodical and calculating cover-up.

I want to be counted as an older survivor of childhood sexual abuse who, until recently, has suffered in silence and for whom seeking justice and accountability is stifled by Connecticut's failure to adopt a "revival window" for otherwise time-barred claims. I urge this Task Force to recommend that Connecticut adopt a "revival window" so that perpetrators and responsible institutions can be held accountable to older victims of childhood sexual abuse.

Thank you.