

March 6 2012

House Judiciary Committee

SB 304 Certified Batterer Intervention Program Act.

Support

Mr Chairman and members of the Committee, I Michael Kaberline am here to testify in support of SB 304 Certified Batterer Intervention Program Act.

I am not a professional in the field of Batterers Intervention. My opinions come from my life experiences. I am a Batterer. I have severely abused my wife Jennifer, emotionally, physically, verbally, and sexually. I did this for approximately eight years. During these eight years I sought outside help. I used my employee assistance program and was referred to a provider who saw me for three sessions and then referred me to another provider. These two providers used this time to discuss local sports and current news stories, while colluding with me by saying that "We understand that Jennifer is blowing things way out of proportion. Guys get angry sometimes, women don't understand" . It was even explained to me that I needed to smooth things over at home because if Jennifer sought help at the shelter I would soon be in trouble, since the victim advocates prey on vulnerable women, and target them to get PFA's because they are man haters. I was told that I had an anger problem and just needed to identify my triggers and stay away from them. At the same time Jennifer was being told that it was her job to monitor my moods and defuse any problems since I was not able to do so myself. She was told in marriage counseling that she was expecting too much of me to think that I could come home from a hard days work and be expected to help out with the house and kids too. She was to take care of those things so I didn't boil over and hurt anyone. This allowed me to blame her for all my problems. This attempt to get help failed and not only prolonged the abuse on Jennifer, but made me feel justified in many of my abuses and I escalated.

At another time I sought help for my sexual abuse. I was tired of disrespecting Jennifer and needed help to stop it. This proved to be more expensive sessions just to talk sports and collude. It was explained to me that like my drinking problem, being able to respect women was out of my control, that Jennifer and I should both accept that I would probably "relapse" which meant demand sex from her and if she wasn't willing she should accept that I was going to cheat on her and I had no control over that. She was told if she really didn't want me watching porn with kids in the living room, she should research and purchase a parental control program for the computer that blocked those sites, she should treat me like a little kid and not tell me the password to my computer, that was how our marriage could be equal and happy.

I eventually became very violent. On the worst occasion I trapped Jennifer in the house, punched, pushed, and strangled her. On at least two occasions she was forcibly raped, not just mentally and emotionally coerced into sex, which I have learned is also rape. The only way it could have gotten

any worse would have been murder. Jennifer and our kids were living in hell. I was never charged for any of these crimes due to the lack of evidence. I eventually was charged with thirteen counts of violating a protection order, one count criminal threat, and one count phone harassment. A far cry from what I actually deserved. I plead out to a diversion and as part of the agreement I was ordered to attend The Family Peace Initiative at the YWCA here in Topeka. At FPI I learned that I did not have an anger problem. I learned that I was in fact a Batterer. A batterer cannot be treated with anger management. It just leads to blame and minimization. I had to be held accountable and all my justification had to be removed. I had to get in touch with feelings that I did not want to acknowledge existed. I had to learn empathy. Unlike anger management in FPI I learned why in certain situations I became violent, and felt entitled. Usually the adverse feelings could be traced back to childhood memories. This is a process I never got in anger management. It is only achieved in an intense Batterers Intervention Program. I believe without a program similar to this the abuse will only get worse.

I have been violence free for almost two years. Jennifer and I now have a happy and healthy marriage, without abuse. I currently volunteer with Family Peace Initiative by sitting in two groups a week. I owe it all my success to the Family Peace Initiative, Courts, and Law Enforcement Officers that held me accountable. I believe the state should certify Batterers Intervention Programs to ensure that offenders are making it to the correct programs to help them. If offenders are going to be referred to programs instead of jail we need to ensure these programs are not only accomplishing the goals with the batterers, but not making the violence worse towards the women and children they should be helping. It should not be a get out of jail free card. It's time to hold the men of Kansas accountable, and end the abuse of our women and children.

Thank You for your time,

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