



## The Awareness Center, Inc.

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### Testifying at Legislative Hearings

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If you are a survivors of childhood sexual abuse who is considering to provide testimony at legislative hearings please be aware of some the risks you may endure.

Please note that it is NOT mandatory that you sign the statement to testify, it is simply a request that you read and fully understand the risks involved in taking an active role in this legislative process.

In the past survivors who testified, shared a common experience -- the feeling of DEVASTATION, was moderate to severe. While providing testimony to make laws better is just and noble, yet it is also important to be aware of the risks. We all need to have support people in which we can debrief with immediately afterwards and the weeks or months afterwards. Doing so can help elevate the degree of devastation we may experience.

In an effort to warn each and every person who is considering providing testimony, it is suggested that you read and accept the statement below before agreeing to testify. The choice is totally yours and there is no expectation for you to publicly take a stand. There is the requirement that you put your own personal needs first. It is vitally important for you to take care of yourself!

1. I acknowledge that I or someone that I love was sexually abused, as a child.
2. I acknowledge that significant to severe trauma resulted because of that abuse (to myself or my family member, friend, etc.).
3. My intention is to bring public awareness and attention to what has happened in the past.
4. I believe that by speaking publicly, my testimony will enable me to seek some level of justice for my own personal victimization that I experienced as a child and endured over a lifetime (or that of someone I love).
5. I understand that providing testimony could result in me feeling re-traumatized/victimized.
6. I understand that there are very powerful opponents to this legislation that have significant influence on legislators in stealth like manner.
7. I understand that no matter how wrong I feel they are, they still wield influence that is secretive, very well financed and have been historically successful in killing legislation to right this wrong and to protect future generations of children. I understand this is at the expense of current and future generations of children as well as the re victimization of myself as a survivor.
8. I UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE PERSONAL RISKS of feeling overwhelmed by sharing my abuse experiences.
9. I understand that I may feel angry, sad, depressed and re-victimized should this proposed legislation not pass.
10. I agree to have safe people in place to debrief with immediately after providing my testimony and for the months to come. These safe people can include other survivors, family members, friends and or a therapist.
11. **Above all else, I agree to put my own well being first.**

With this understanding I still wish to testify in hopes of seeking justice for what happened to me as a child (or my loved one) and most important to ensure that I do what I can to protect future innocent children from harm in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date