

Dear Senators of the Vermont Senate Committee on Judiciary,

A few weeks ago I sat in front of you and publicly shared the most vulnerable time of my life... A time that I, as a 12-year-old girl at the time, had no control over... A time that altered my life in one of the worst ways possible forever.

As a victim watching each session on S18, I have continued to be very frustrated. I feel us victims are, once again, getting lost in the process of some very crucial decisions. Yes, the name of Good Time Rule is an issue. Yes, how we were notified was/is an issue. But, the biggest reason for these changes is being completely lost... Victims. Victims whose lives were already affected by the choice of the offender, a choice completely out of their control, and are continuing to be affected in multiple ways.

I invite you to think again about the statement I gave just a few weeks ago. Think about me at 12-years-old. My innocence as a 7th grade girl was taken from me at a sleepover after a middle school dance by a 50-year-old man. Think about me now at 25 years old. I have worked *very* hard to become the person I am today, but it was *not* easy. I struggled in more ways than I can explain. I continue to struggle from experiencing such a violent act at a young age. I will continue to heal for the rest of my life because of the sexual abuse I endured. I want to reiterate to you that *my victim sentence does not end...* I will live with this for the rest of my life *no matter what I do or where I go.*

Before you continue voting on changes regarding S18, starting with lewd and lascivious conduct with a child on Tuesday, I urge you to remember me and my story. I urge you to also think about all the other victims that are affected by the decisions that are being made as well.

I want to thank you again for giving me the chance to share my story a few weeks ago. Thank you for also taking the time to read my letter and the time you have given to considering S18.

Sincerely,
Taylor Fontaine