

Dear Madame Chair and House Labor Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the Dignity At Work Act, House bill 6352.

My name is Vicki Courtemanche. I want to see legislation pass because **WE KNOW** employers respond to legal incentive.

In 2017 over 60 **million** employees were bullied and mobbed in the US workplace. I am one of them. Our stories disturbingly similar. I incurred substantial physical, mental and emotional health harm while at work. I was diagnosed with silent migraines, severe anxiety, chronic insomnia and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. I left my job as a direct result of the incurred harm. My recovery was painful, lingering and debilitating. I survived but others did not.

**Employers are NOT liable for the psychological safety of their employees, nor do they want to be.** It is the premise upon which the entire phenomenon of employee exploitation rests.

When I reported the abusive behavior of a bullying co-worker, **I unknowingly became a threat of liability to my employer.** Instead of addressing the abusive behavior, my employer doubled down and turned the heat up. The bully's behavior escalated, while my employer's representative employees, as they **always** identified themselves, protracted and enflamed the situation utilizing **empty, deceptive** protocol. Then sat back and waited for me to snap.

Snapping under stress, **silent killer stress**, is as reliable and predictable as the sun coming up. When I left work on the verge of physical and mental collapse, **I took the threat of liability with me.** In the aftermath, when I realized the intentionality of the harm, I was without recourse.

4 **decades** of research reveals my demise was set in stone the moment I reported abusive behavior. **Targeted and victimized** are the descriptors that researchers use to depict employees in **these specific types off abusive work environments.** Bullying and mobbing are not workplace glitches, **they are workplace practices.** Researchers refer to them as **interpersonal abuse systems and processes of dehumanization.**

I trusted my employer's operative employees because they were sitting in an administrative office building on a college campus, cashing six figure paychecks. **They played god with my very life and well-being.** My basic human rights were **denied and violated** without shame or consequence in broad daylight as if rubber stamping a memo. Coercing nervous breakdowns in unwitting employees, **exploiting the sanctity of human life and well-being** in order to avoid **perceived** threats of liability, is nothing short of a banality of evil.

I want to see **THIS** legislation pass because it holds employers accountable with no lame excuses attached. **THEY KNOW!**

Please pass HB6352

Thank you for the opportunity to testify!

Sincerely,

Vicki Courtemanche

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