

## Rep. Craven, Robert E.

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**From:** David Finch <traxiussorrowman@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 20, 2025 11:39 PM  
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**Subject:** HB-5177 Harters Law

Greetings,

Let me introduce myself. My name is David Leroy Harter Finch.

I am writing this letter in the hopes of bringing HB-5177 to a vote in this session.

This bill must pass this session.

A little background on me here. I am a Rhode Island native, born in Cranston and lived in Coventry and West Greenwich. I have resided in Australia with my wife for the past 13 years. The law in Australia is simple when it comes to child abuse. There no statutes, none, no limitations. This is as it should be. Limitation Act 1969 Section 6-A.

Child abuse ranks right up there with murder if you look at the long term cost to the victims.

The price victims pay varies from case to case as each individual deals with trauma in different ways.

Let me tell you what it cost me:

5 months of my life in Butler Hospital.

I am 58 years old and wake up every day feeling worthless.

Some 45 years later I hate myself, I feel I am unworthy of love. I have love but I wonder at my wife's sanity in keeping me around sometimes.

I suffer from chronic depression, PTSD, C-PTSD, anxiety, and severe OCD. My sister Lisa who you might know from her testimony for the Judicial Committee suffers many of the same issues as I do as a result of her abuse as well.

Through the years the diagnoses have changed as terminology has changed but the symptoms are the same. I am broken and try to find my happiness as life goes on. A few hospitalizations that I had to pay for out of pocket and I no longer sought treatment, the cost was too high. To get well through the established medical system would have made me homeless like so many people who suffer from mental conditions are. I was 24 when I finally spoke to a professional and talked about my abuse. The current statute of limitations of three years from my 18th birthday had expired. I had no hope of getting the medical attention that I so badly needed through civil recourse. I did not want to sue for justice, I wanted to sue for medical bills.

I wrote down the narrative of my first 15 years, the damaging years in a memoir called Here There Be Monsters. Rep Casimiro read my book and got in contact with me and my Sister Lisa. She decided to push for better statutes in regards to child abuse. I applaud her actions, she has stepped up with the other sponsors of this bill to try to make a difference for victims of child abuse.

I am horrified at the current state of affairs when it comes to the victims of child abuse in the USA not just Rhode Island. 3 years for criminal charges and 3 years for civil charges? Victims do not come forward that fast, it takes time and sometimes half a lifetime to come to terms and try to get justice.

Please HB-5177 needs to be passed and passed soon. The statute is for 35 years. I have aged out of any chance for justice for myself. But please for the generations of children to come. Please bring HB-5177 up for a vote and please vote yes.

David L H Finch  
Author of Here There Be Monsters