

## Roberta DiMezza

---

**From:** Clara Hardy <clarapvd@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 8, 2022 7:36 PM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee  
**Subject:** written testimony for HB 6637

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello, my name is Clara Hardy and I am writing in support of HB 6637 that would make custodial sexual assault illegal when a person is in the custody of a police officer, correctional officer, and/or a probation or parole officer.

When I first heard that there actually had to be a bill to make custodial sexual assault illegal, I was stunned that it isn't already illegal. I also don't understand what makes sexual assault illegal for everyone else, except for those in the law enforcement field. What puts them above the law? They also have a duty to serve and PROTECT and that should include everyone! Who is protecting the victims that are being assaulted by them?

As a licensed social worker, I am ethically bound by certain principles. One of these ethical principles is to not have sex (either consensual or nonconsensual) with a client. This seems so obvious to me as a therapist. I am always keeping in mind that there is a power dynamic between myself and my client and to always be observant of how I yield this "power" in the relationship. Abusing this power could mean losing my license and even worse, possibly causing harm to an already vulnerable person.

Just like in my professional field, law enforcement officers yield power over vulnerable people. They not only should be held to a professional ethical standard like in most professions, but also held legally responsible if they abuse their power!

That is why I support HB 6637 making custodial sexual assault illegal.

Sincerely,  
Clara Hardy