

Testimony Supporting House Bill 6352: The Dignity at Work Act

My name is Bob Richardson and I'm working for the National Workplace Bullying Coalition as Director of a team in Florida for the Dignity at Work Act. I graduated Summa cum laude with a BS degree in Computer Science and I have over 25 years of experience as an Application Developer with over 10 years working on Tandem Systems which is used in financial applications.

My career as a Sr Application Developer was destroyed and my life has literally been turned upside down by a very aggressive work place bully. He was a co-worker who first acted as my friend and then later, after a few years, literally turned on me in the office shortly after he had heard that the company that we had been working for was going to begin outsourcing our jobs overseas to India. Long story short, I was the person the company had to lay off and the bully was able to keep his position and take over my job.

That's just the beginning of my story. After I left that company in Wilmington DE, the person who bullied me had actually kept tabs of me as I had worked for other companies around the country. He showed up with his aggressive style of bullying me when I worked in Little Rock, AR and finally at a company I worked for in Pittsburgh PA as a consultant. In Little Rock, I know for a fact that he had spread vicious lies about me to my manager to the point where my manager had actually set me up to be laid off during the big corporate restructuring layoff. In Pittsburgh, I was fired only 3 weeks after my boss had told me that I was doing a great job.

After that, I was devastated. I was unable to find another job and I had to foreclose on my home in Pennsylvania and file for Chapter 7 Bankruptcy.

What he does is unbelievable. He's like a cancer who comes into the office, makes friends, applies for a job, etc., and then focuses on defaming my character to the degree where the company just has to let me go.

Shortly after I moved back home, I visited an attorney who was licensed in both Pennsylvania and Delaware. He explained to me that there was nothing that I could do. If I tried suing the bully, I most likely would lose. Bullying is not illegal.

With the Dignity at Work act in place, I would have been able to go after that person who had bullied me and ruined my career. Currently I'm retired living in Florida and have been working at helping others who find themselves being bullied in the workplace. I'm hoping that the House Labor Committee will join me in supporting and moving forward with house bill 6352, the new Dignity at Work act in Rhode Island.

Thank you and God Bless,

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