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News from the Michigan Association for Justice

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Every survivor of sexual assault deserves the right to seek justice

MAJ supports bills to expand civil statute of limitations for survivors of sexual assault

LANSING—Michigan Association for Justice (MAJ) President Donna MacKenzie today issued the following statement in support of a package of bills introduced by State Representatives Julie Brixie (D-Meridian Township), Nate Shannon (D-Sterling Heights), and Laurie Pohutsky (D-Livonia) to ensure all survivors of sexual assault in Michigan receive the justice they deserve. The bills would eliminate the civil statute of limitations if there is a criminal prosecution that results in a conviction. They also enable all survivors to file claims against their abusers up to age 48 or seven years from the time the survivor realized they were abused, whichever is later.

“Every survivor of sexual assault deserves the right to seek justice. Unfortunately, too many survivors never get their day in court because of Michigan’s draconian statute of limitation law.

Justice demands more than a piecemeal approach and limited reforms when predators like Robert Anderson or Larry Nassar are discovered decades later after being concealed by a culture of indifference and institutional protection. It is time for Michigan to stop shielding serial abusers and join the growing list of states that are modernizing archaic statutes of limitation laws to allow sexual assault survivors to come forward and seek justice when they are ready to do so.

Many survivors of child sexual abuse do not disclose it until they are adults, and even adults wait many years before disclosing. According to CHILD USA, a nonprofit think tank that promotes justice for victims of child abuse and neglect, the average age for reporting sexual assault is 52. Currently, the statute of limitations in Michigan expires at age 28.

We must knock down the barriers that block access to our civil justice system. MAJ will continue to support and fight for all the survivors of sexual assault who show amazing strength and courage in coming forward. Because of them, the fight for justice will continue.”

The bills are HB 6252, HB 6253, and HB 6254.

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*The **Michigan Association for Justice**, formerly the Michigan Trial Lawyers Association (MTLA), is a professional association of over 1,500 plaintiff’s attorneys and staff, with offices in Lansing, Michigan.*