

Testimony Of Kayleigh Kozak

Namesake
Of
“Kayleigh’s Law”

before the

US House Judiciary Subcommittee on
Crime and Federal Government
Surveillance

April 29th, 2026

Hello, Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in strong support of H.R. 8481, the Kayleigh's Law Act of 2026. My name is Kayleigh Kozak. I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, and I am the namesake behind Kayleigh's Law.

When I was a little girl, telling the truth cost me everything.

At twelve years old, a trusted teacher who was also my club soccer coach chose to sexually abuse me over a two-year period. In 2006, he was originally charged with eight counts of child sexual abuse in Maricopa County Superior Court ([Case No. CR2006-156684](#)). These included multiple counts of Molestation of a Child, Sexual Abuse, Attempted Sexual Conduct with a Minor, and Luring a Minor for Sexual Exploitation, most classified as Dangerous Crimes Against a Child under Arizona law, carrying potential sentences of 25 years to life.

Instead of facing full accountability, under the falsely proclaimed “tough on child predator” laws, he received a drastically reduced plea deal: conviction on two counts — Sexual Abuse and Luring a Minor for Sexual Exploitation, both Class 3 felonies. He served just nine months in jail and, at his request, was placed on two terms of lifetime probation in lieu of prison time. This sweetheart plea deal for him became a living hell for me. It is important to note that this experience is not unique. It is typical for these types of crimes to be pled down significantly, especially at the state and local level.

In January 2020, I received a phone call I never expected. My abuser had petitioned for early termination of his lifetime probation, and a court hearing was scheduled in just three weeks. Broken and overwhelmed, I had to do what no victim should ever have to do: stand in court and face my abuser again almost two decades later, pleading with the judge not to grant his motion. During that hearing, I was still unaware of how the system truly works for victims of these heinous crimes. When I asked what protection I would have if his probation was terminated, I was told “none.” The only safeguard preventing him from contacting me was tied directly to the terms of his probation.

That experience exposed a critical flaw in our justice system: a victim's protection too often depends entirely on the perpetrator's post-conviction

conditions — specifically in Arizona, the terms of their probation — conditions that can end or change at any time. The judge denied his motion that day, but discovering this vulnerability ignited a fire in me I could not ignore. No victim should ever have to repeatedly face their convicted abuser in court simply to maintain basic safety because the terms of their conviction may change.

That was just the start of the battles I am still fighting long after my abuser's so-called "lifetime" sentence. Since that January 2020 hearing, my abuser's case revealed multiple gaps in the system. I was assured he would receive lifetime probation and public sex offender registration, only to learn "lifetime" did not mean permanent. The lifetime probation he was originally sentenced to offered me a sense of safety and protection.

I spearheaded Kayleigh's Law in Arizona to ensure victims would have permanent protection from the person convicted of harming them. No victim should have to endure this and fight for their protection when a perpetrator's status may change or end.

These firsthand experiences drove me to advocate and educate others about the realities victims face and how the system actually works. There is so much misconception and misunderstanding when it comes to how these crimes and the various associated charges, are handled.

Just two months ago, in February 2026, I found myself back in court again, for the same reason as in 2020. Only this time, I was educated and informed. This time was different. Prior to entering the hearing room, I witnessed my abuser served with a lifetime no-contact injunction under Kayleigh's Law (Appendix A). Meaning, regardless of what the judge ultimately decides about his probation and what conditions may change, one thing remains permanent: I now have lifelong protection.

The abuse itself was horrific. What no one prepares you for is the lifelong hell that follows. This isn't just my reality; this is the reality for so many victims across our nation, and we must do better.

The harm caused by sexual assault is not temporary. It is lifelong. The protections for those who have been sexually violated should be lifelong too.

There is little to no uniformity across states or federally pertaining to sex crime definitions, sex offender registry, probation requirements, or protective orders. If

the justice system is going to continue granting leniency to individuals convicted of sex offenses, fail to fully enforce the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) standards, and remove convicted offenders from probation and sex offender registries — which upon conviction are typically the conditions that prevent an offender from having contact with their victim — then the very least it should do is guarantee victims permanent protection from the person who was convicted of violating them. Victims everywhere, including those on tribal reservations, are worthy of this lifelong protection. Pursuing this law nationally has always been the goal.

It is important to understand protective orders and why the permanent protection under Kayleigh's Law is needed. A protective order — also referred to as a restraining order, injunction against harassment, criminal order of protection, or civil order of protection — is a court-issued legal tool designed to prohibit the defendant from having any contact with the petitioner. These orders vary significantly across the country in name, eligibility, scope, duration, and enforcement. This makes the protections they offer inconsistent.

Not all protective orders require a criminal conviction. Civil protective orders can often be obtained without an arrest or conviction. Criminal protective orders, tied to a conviction, carry stronger enforcement. However, in most states, even after a conviction for a heinous crime, these orders remain temporary. They often expire when probation, parole, or registration requirements end. Victims frequently must return to court and prove a new threat simply to maintain protection. This forces survivors to repeatedly confront their abusers and revictimizes them. It also creates a system where an already victimized individual needs to wait for additional pain and suffering before protection is extended.

While many states have updated laws on sex crimes and created enhancements for offenses, especially for crimes against children, the priority of offering victims' permanent protection has failed to follow suit. It is not the severity that serves as a deterrent, it is the certainty. Victims deserve the certainty of knowing that regardless of what conditions change for the offender, that this permanent protection will remain.

Kayleigh's Law (A.R.S. § 13-719) passed in the Arizona legislature with strong bipartisan support and was signed into law in 2021 by Governor Ducey (with provisions effective shortly thereafter). It empowers judges to issue lifetime no-

contact injunctions at sentencing for convictions involving dangerous, serious, violent, or specified sexual offenses. These orders prohibit all contact, cannot be appealed by the offender, and remain in effect for the perpetrator's natural lifetime, unless the victim chooses to lift them. Violations constitute new felonies. In Arizona, victims can also petition for this protection post-conviction.

In its first full year, more than 1,000 Arizona victims obtained this permanent protection (Appendix B). In Arizona it is referred to as a lifetime injunction under Kayleigh's Law, providing lasting peace of mind and reducing repeated court burdens. Arizona has expanded it further with recent legislation, such as SB1211 in 2026 for aggravated harassment.

Wisconsin enacted a version of Kayleigh's Law in 2023, signed by Governor Evers. As of 2026, a version is moving through the legislative process in California, though it has been amended to limit protection to 25 years. Other states such as Colorado, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia have options for permanent protective orders, but they are often complex, limited, and difficult to obtain.

Arizona has set the gold standard with the most proactive, victim-focused approach in obtaining permanent protection from the individual who has been convicted of sexually violating them. For federal cases, Kayleigh's Law would create the permanent protection order, and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) would ensure that protection follows the victim across every state line in the United States. While VAWA provides the legal infrastructure for interstate enforcement, it does not actually create the orders, it only mandates that states honor what other states issue. This is why a permanent protection order through Kayleigh's Law is needed.

Sexual violence creates lifelong trauma. Approximately 70% of rape and sexual assault victims experience moderate to severe distress, higher than for any other crime.

This is a national crisis: Federal sex crimes have surged more than 62% since 2020, and more than 87% end in plea deals that reduce charges and sentences.

If the system is going to continue to allow leniency for sexual offenders, it must prioritize and guarantee permanent protection for the victims of these crimes.

Kayleigh's Law decouples victim protection from the convicted offender's changing status. The conviction itself would be what justifies a lifetime no-contact injunction. Arizona's model has proven effective and serves as the gold standard. It doesn't just extend protections for victims of convicted offenders, it empowers them.

Sexual predators don't make mistakes. They make conscious choices. Victims — when brave enough to speak up against their abusers — are at the mercy of the decisions made by the criminal justice system. I have zero sympathy for pedophiles and sex offenders. The hardships they face as a result of the disgusting choices they made should never supersede a victim's right to indefinite, lifelong protection from them.

Kayleigh's Law prioritizes protecting victims of these crimes from the extended trauma of continued exposure to the convicted offenders.

In sixth grade, at a place where I should have been safe — my elementary school — my teacher pulled me into the equipment room closet, locked the door, molested me until he was sexually satisfied. When he was finished, he shoved me out the side door and sent me back to class as if nothing had happened. In a matter of minutes, my entire life was changed forever by someone who was in a position of trust and was supposed to protect me. That was just the beginning of the sexual abuse and where my hell here on earth began, the hell that I am still stuck in today.

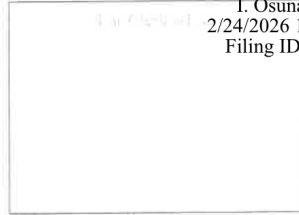
I could not protect myself then. But I can fight to protect myself, other innocent children, and every victim now. I ask that you fight to protect them too.

I urge this Subcommittee to lead and support H.R. 8481, the Kayleigh's Law Act of 2026, so that every survivor in America has the permanent protection that they deserve.

I will never stop fighting for victims and survivors, Because You Still Matter.

APPENDIX A (2026)

Clerk of the Superior Court
*** Electronically Filed ***
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2/24/2026 10:26:29 AM
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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF MARICOPA

State of Arizona
Plaintiff

CR2006-156684-001

JOSHUA JOEL JACOBSEN,
Defendant.

DECLARATION OF SERVICE OF
ORDER FOR LIFETIME NO-CONTACT
INJUNCTION (A.R.S. §13-719)

Being duly qualified by law, I swear or certify that a copy of the *Order for Lifetime No-Contact Injunction* was personally served on the defendant, **JOSHUA JACOBSEN**, on this date: 2/20/26 at this time: 1015 HRS, at the following location:

175 W. Madison Phoenix, AZ 85003

I am a (check one): Registered process server Peace/correction/detention officer.

I declare under penalty of perjury the foregoing is true and correct.

[Signature] 2404 2/20/26
Signature of Person Serving Document Date

Printed Name of Person Serving Document: D. R. Osce

Agency: PINAL COUNTY S.O. ID # 2404

Defendant's last known address:

Joshua Joel Jacobsen

[Redacted]

Glendale AZ 85308

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

DOB: 02/02/1975

SEX*	RACE*	DOB*	HT	WT
M	W	02/02/75		
EYES*	HAIR*			
DRIVER LICENSE # OR STATE IDENTIFICATION		STATE	EXP DATE	

RETURN DECLARATION OF SERVICE OF ORDER FOR LIFETIME NO-CONTACT INJUNCTION TO THE SUPERIOR COURT LISTED ABOVE

APPENDIX B (2025)

Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted

¹Total Number of Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted

At Sentencing

(INI Total Docket Usage)

CY 2024

Year	Month	Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted
2024	January	84
2024	February	88
2024	March	84
2024	April	72
2024	May	69
2024	June	86
2024	July	63
2024	August	72
2024	September	64
2024	October	82
2024	November	68
2024	December	72
Total		904

¹Total Number of Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted

Retroactively

(INR Total Docket Usage)

CY 2024

Year	Month	Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted
2024	January	0
2024	February	0
2024	March	6
2024	April	2
2024	May	2
2024	June	0
2024	July	5
2024	August	12
2024	September	3
2024	October	3
2024	November	2
2024	December	1
Total		36

Annual Breakdown (since A.R.S. 13-719 start date)

Year	Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted
9/24/2022 - 12/31/2022	152
2023	1004
2024	904
01/01/2025 - 01/31/2025	74
Total	2134

*A.R.S. 13-719 went live September 24th, 2022.

Annual Breakdown (since A.R.S. 13-719 start date)

Year	Lifetime Injunctions Issued or Granted
9/24/2022 - 12/31/2022	15
2023	55
2024	36
01/01/2025 - 01/31/2025	8
Total	114

*A.R.S. 13-719 went live September 24th, 2022.

¹ The following data was ran starting September 24th, 2022, through January 31, 2025 (Annual Breakdown). The CY 2024 data covers all of 2024. The total number was calculated by the unique Docket ID's. This means that there can be multiple unique Docket ID's for one case.