

(Date)

The Honorable (Senator Name)

P.O. Box

Capitol Station

Austin, TX 78711

RE: Support for SB 1109, also known as the “Christine Blubaugh Act”

Dear Senator,

My name is (your first and last name) and I am (your professional affiliation and whether you reside/work in his/her district). I am writing to express my support for the **Christine Blubaugh Act** (SB 1109) and to ask you to support its passage into law.

Christine Blubaugh was a vibrant and beautiful 16-year-old high school Junior in Grand Prairie, Texas. She was a beloved daughter, twin sister, and friend. On March 25, 2000 Christine was murdered by her boyfriend during a dating violence encounter. Christine had her entire life ahead of her and it was stolen during a horrific act of dating violence. This tragedy shined a bright light on the scourge of teen dating violence in Texas and the dire need to protect our children through education.

Currently, Texas does not require public schools to provide instruction relating to the prevention of child abuse, domestic violence, and dating violence. This is a dangerous gap that needs to be filled in order to protect children in our state. There is more than sufficient data to prove that our children, sadly, are not immune to the realities of violence in the home and in dating relationships. Here is just some of the data:

Child Abuse

- Texas is number 1 in the nation for the number of child abuse fatalities¹
- Texas is number 3 in the nation for most instances of confirmed child abuse cases²

Domestic Violence

- Texas accounts for 10 percent of the nation’s domestic violence murders³
- 1 in 6 homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner⁴
- Most instances of domestic violence occur from 6pm-6am while children are at home⁵

Dating Violence

- 1 in 3 teenage girls is a victim of partner abuse⁶
- 81% of parents believe teen dating violence is not an issue or don’t know if it’s an issue, demonstrating the need for children to be educated⁷

¹ https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Reports_and_Presentations/PEI/documents/2020/2020-03-01_FY2019_Child_Fatality_and_Near_Fatality_Annual_Report.pdf

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/203841/number-of-child-abuse-cases-in-the-us-by-state/>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/fastfact.html>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/fastfact.html>

⁵ <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/225722.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.texasadvocacyproject.org/power-based-abuse/what-you-need-know/teens>

⁷ <https://avda-tx.org/2019/02/understanding-dating-violence/>

Given the staggering statistics mentioned, this Bill, if it became law, would stand to save young lives in the State of Texas. I believe, with all I have, that the most powerful weapon we possess to fight the scourge of child abuse, domestic violence and dating violence amongst our youth is education. We must arm our children with the tools they need to help them recognize the signs of a dating violence relationship, or domestic violence at home, and the resources to help them escape.

I am asking that you stand with me in committing to help prevent another young Texas child from being murdered. We have the power to protect our kids now. With your help we will do just that. Thank you for all you do to fight for Texas kids.

Sincerely,

(Your name and full contact information)