

Thank you Madam Chairperson,

My name is Ami Garry and I work as the Victim Advocate Coordinator and have been advocating for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault for the past 8 years.

I have witnessed many victims being re victimized by American Sign Language Interpreters not being understood or not having certified interpreter available during their traumatic times.

The hardest part of my job is seeing the children of Deaf parents being victimized by the legal system where I've seen children of Deaf Adults (CODAs) being pulled into interpreting for one of their parents.

Case # 1: A Sheriff asking the 14 years old boy to interpret for his mother about serving the protective order to the father and how they will arrest the father if he comes near his mother or home. This is a 14 years old teenager explaining to his mother about the protective order against his father and the possibility to arrest his father if he violated the protective order.

Case # 2: A daughter who was in her mid-20's interpreted for her mother who was raped by a young man during police reporting and the case was thrown out (other word for "thrown out"??) due to not effective communication between the police and victim. The mother was not comfortable at all to express her story about Sexual Assault as she did not want the daughter to know the painful details of what really happened.

Case # 3: At the shelter, a staff was relying on a 4 years old girl to have her mother the victim to answer some questions during the intake. It was reported that they are not required to get a certified interpreter here in Colorado and rather use the children to save time and money.

It's time for Colorado to take responsibility to ensure that full effective communication is happening and not to re victimized the children by forcing or pushing them to interpret. Thank you for letting me have the opportunity to voice for the victims and their children.