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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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APPROPRIATIONS
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OF EDUCATION, CHAIR
TRANSPORTATION

May 22, 2019

Dear Members of the House Committee on Families, Children, and Seniors:

Allow me to introduce my constituent from Constantine, Kaleena Richardson, in absentia. Unfortunately I am across the street in a meeting of the Appropriations Committee at this time, but I wanted to preface Kaleena's testimony with a small introduction as I've known her and her family for quite some time now.

On the evening of July 20, 2017, Kaleena's ex-husband committed a murder in Kalamazoo County and then proceeded to her house in Constantine where he brutally murdered her husband, Shane Richardson, in front of Kaleena and her children. I don't need to tell you how much trauma that has caused them. Shane and I were high school classmates and he and Kaleena were pregnant with their first child together at the time of the murder. Thankfully, the perpetrator was convicted quickly in a Kalamazoo County court of law for the first murder and was just convicted of Shane's murder in St. Joseph County Circuit Court this past Friday. Justice has been served, but the effects cannot be undone.

Despite the fact that no one can go back in time and change what was done, Kaleena's children want a simple thing. They want to change their surname and yet they cannot. That's where we can come in and do a small thing, not for their family primarily as any change in law will probably be too late for them to make much of a difference, but for others in the future who go through similar circumstances. I am more than willing to be flexible and work with the committee chair and members toward achieving this end in some way. Thank you for your time and please feel free to ask me or Kaleena any questions that arise this morning. We are at your service.

Gratefully,

Aaron G. Miller (R-Sturgis)
Michigan House of Representatives, District 59