



We have been talking to domestic violence survivors, or their advocates, who have done what we encourage victims to do: report the abuse and seek help. In many cases, these survivors are **met with victim-blaming in the courts**, and some face further trauma when they are wrongfully punished for the actions of their abusers.

Jane is one of those survivors. After returning from service in the Iraq War, Jane suffered severe physical abuse from her ex-partner. When he assaulted her in one state, she called the police and reported him; when he got out of jail, he followed her and their son to a new state.

Jane fled with her child to Washington, where she struggled to find steady work, reliable housing, and health care for her son, who was suffering with trauma from the abuse he had witnessed. She reached out to the state's child welfare system for help.

The state **used her status as a survivor against her**—suggesting that she was an unfit parent because *she* was a victim of abuse—and took her son away for months.

JANE SOUGHT SAFETY FOR HER CHILD, BUT INSTEAD, SHE LOST THE RIGHT TO PARENT HIM FOR ALMOST A YEAR, LEAVING THEM BOTH EMOTIONALLY HARMED.

We see a similar predicament for survivors of sexual assault when they seek protection in the form of a sexual assault protection order.

DAMNED IF YOU DO, DAMNED IF YOU DON'T

Sometimes when a woman does what we, as a society, tell victims to do to get help, she ends up in a worse position.

*No one should be placed in the double bind of needing protection, but **being punished when they ask for it**. Yet we see this happening, over and over, to survivors in Washington State.*

Rebecca, a university student, had returned to her dorm room after a night spent at parties with friends, where she had been drinking. Later that night, a classmate sexually assaulted her in her room. Shaken and afraid after the attack, she went to court to ask for a protection order. **But the court denied her request.**

After ruling against Rebecca, **the judge chastised her** for drinking, stating, "Alcohol's not good, especially when you're a good-looking lady running around on campus."

REBECCA SOUGHT PROTECTION FROM THE PERSON WHO RAPED HER, AND INSTEAD GOT A LECTURE ON THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL—AND A HARSH LESSON IN THE ROLE OF RAPE MYTHS IN OUR COURT SYSTEM.

And then there are the domestic violence survivors who are granted protection against their abusers—but only for a short period of time.

When Anna filed for a domestic violence protection order against her abusive husband, she specifically requested that the order be permanent. She believed that her husband would resume abusing her and her children after the order expired. Yet the court granted an order protecting her for **only 65 days**, substantially shorter than the standard minimum term of one year.

Why? The court said that Anna and her husband could "start a divorce" and that the family court could "renew and extend the protection if appropriate." But Anna did not have a lawyer, and

was put in the position of having to go back to court—again and again—to get the protection she and her children needed.

ANNA ASKED THE COURT FOR HELP KEEPING HERSELF AND HER CHILDREN SAFE, BUT WAS GIVEN LESS THAN THE BARE MINIMUM—AND THEN REQUIRED TO FILE ANOTHER CASE WITHOUT LEGAL HELP.

When we hear stories like these, we quickly realize that our work is far from finished. Strong laws that protect survivors

of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are only the beginning—they do not fulfill their promise when courts and state agencies don't apply them correctly.

Damned if you do, damned if you don't.

This is not what justice for survivors looks like. Legal Voice is going after **each and every one of these injustices** by filing lawsuits, teaching people about their rights, and demanding change. Because safety for survivors means safety for every survivor—exceptions be damned.

AN INSPIRING EVENING AT THE 2016 LEGAL VOICE AUCTION

Wow! You are extraordinary. You made the 2016 Legal Voice Auction a smashing success! Thank you for joining us in celebration of all that we've accomplished together, and for **investing in the change yet to come**. Along with your friends, colleagues, family members, and fellow supporters, you raised \$285,000 to support our work moving forward. Incredible!

This past year has been full of game-changing victories: we (finally!) won our pharmacy refusals case, we saw the Supreme Court stand on the right side of reproductive health care access, and we defeated discriminatory legislation that would have rolled back protections for transgender Washingtonians. Together, we've accomplished so much. We look forward to using your support from the auction **to accomplish even more**.

We couldn't put on such a fun and inspiring event without the **generosity and commitment** of our volunteers, local businesses, and friends who donated amazing items and experiences for you to bid on. And, of course, **our sponsors** make it all possible—special thanks to 1st Security Bank, Foster Pepper, Garvey Schubert Barer, Helsell Fetterman, HomeStreet Bank, Justice & Equality Legal Services, K&L Gates, Keller Rohrback, KPMG, MacDonald Hoague & Bayless, Mainstreet Legal Malpractice Insurance, Pacifica Law Group, Perkins Coie, Schwabe Williamson & Wyatt, Skellenger Bender, Stoel Rives, Stokes Lawrence, and Summit Law Group.



LEADING THE CHARGE AGAINST RELIGIOUS REFUSALS

As women gain greater access to health care, and as LGBTQ people gain more equal treatment under the law, conservatives are pushing back and demanding exemptions from progressive laws in the name of religious freedom.



You may recall the 2014 Supreme Court decision in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, which granted for-profit companies the right to disregard laws to which the companies' owners had religious objections. This outrageous and damaging decision shed new light on (and gave more credence to) a devastating trend: elevating someone's religious beliefs **above another person's rights**.

Legal Voice fought this practice for more than 10 years in *Stormans v. Wiesman*, in which the owners of an Olympia pharmacy and two pharmacists claimed that filling prescriptions for emergency contraception trod on their religious freedom rights. We eventually, and rightfully, prevailed earlier this year when the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

This hard-won victory was an important step. But the issue of religious refusals is pervasive, and not just in pharmacies. Other examples of religious refusals include:

- The police officer who objects to guarding an abortion clinic
- Religiously affiliated employers firing workers whose relationships, gender identity, or reproductive choices they find objectionable
- Teachers in public schools—and entire public school systems—refusing to teach evolution and substituting creationism in classes

Legal Voice **continues to be a leader** in the charge against this type of discrimination. We are proud to be helping to organize and lead a gathering in Portland this winter that will bring together organizations and individuals working to fight the wave of state **religious exemptions targeting women and LGBTQ people**. We are hopeful that bringing these people together to make connections will help us battle these refusals at the state level—in the Northwest and beyond.

The Constitution may protect an individual's religious freedom, but it **does not give them a veto** over the rights of others. No exceptions. No exemptions.

INVEST IN SOCIAL CHANGE ON #GIVINGTUESDAY™

The holidays are upon us! Before you get caught up in the bustle of the festivities, we're asking you to focus on what really matters in the season of giving: putting your money where your heart is.

Please help create the change you want to see by supporting our work during **Giving Tuesday on November 29th**.

Last year you made it through Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday, and **supported our efforts to end cyberstalking and harassment** on Giving Tuesday. Please mark your calendar to join us for this global day of giving back.

Your support sustains our work in the courts, legislatures, and communities of the Northwest. You can participate in Giving Tuesday on November 29th by donating directly through the Legal Voice website at www.LegalVoice.org/donate. Let's continue making change—**together!**

SAVE THE DATES!

For more information on these and other Legal Voice events, please visit www.LegalVoice.org/events

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2016
12–1:30 P.M.

Legal Voice's Annual Legislative Lunch & Learn with CLE Credit

To register for 1.5 CLE credits, please visit tinyurl.com/LegalVoiceCLE

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2017
6–8 P.M.

Cocktails for a Cause

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2017
5:30–9:30 P.M.

Legal Voice Auction

LEGAL VOICE

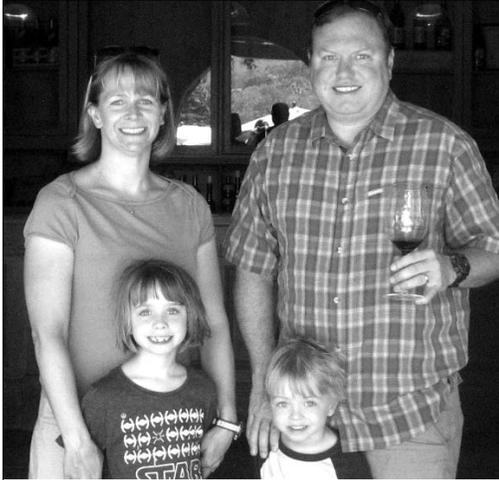
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BECOME A VISIONARY...

BY MOLLY TERWILLIGER
Immediate Past President,
Legal Voice Board of Directors

I have been involved with Legal Voice in various capacities since I moved to Seattle in 1998. In the past 15 years, I've donated my time and money to Legal Voice because I believe that the work we do has the ability to improve the everyday lives of women, girls, and families. I believe that Legal Voice's work will ensure that my daughter has the same rights and opportunities as my son.

No one likes to think about designating a contingent beneficiary in their will, but I recently designated Legal Voice as my contingent beneficiary. It's obviously hard to think about the circumstances that would lead to Legal Voice actually receiving a benefit from our estate. But it is a great relief to think that any amount would be used to carry on the good work of Legal Voice for the benefit of all women, girls, and families.

Legal Voice Visionaries are supporters and friends who have included Legal Voice in their estate plans or wills. If you are interested in our Visionaries program and would like to know more about it, please contact Michelle Johnson, Director of Development, at 206-682-9552 x113, or by email at MJohnson@LegalVoice.org

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