

## "Stop Gun Violence: The Jackson-Elias Domestic Violence Survivor Protection Act"

### Testimony

Good Afternoon,

My name is Kacey Mason and I am here on behalf of my family and my sister, Lori Jackson. Lori had this loud deep voice and the most contagious laugh. When she laughed, you just had to laugh along with her. She was incredibly shy until she got to know you. Once she was comfortable with you, she showed her true silly self and never stopped talking! She had a big heart and would do anything for her family and friends. She loved to travel and we were lucky enough to travel to some amazing places together. That's one of the things I loved most about her, I could always convince her to go on an adventure with me.

Life changed for us when she met her husband and I began to worry that my sister was being abused. The sister who I could always laugh with and be silly with was no longer present. She was physically there, but she was a shell of the person she once was. He was constantly by her side, never letting her talk to anyone alone.

The more I got to know him, the more I became aware of his controlling ways and the more I feared for my sister's safety.

On April 1st, 2014 after a heated argument, where she was pushed to the ground, Lori decided she had had enough and she decided it was time to leave the marriage. It was the happiest day of my life because it was the day I got my sister back. But it quickly turned into a nightmare as her estranged husband began to harass not only Lori but my entire family. We spent the next month living in fear. Fear of where and when her estranged husband would appear and fear of what he was capable of. Every time we left the house we were constantly vigilant of our surroundings. We scanned parking lots for his car before getting out of ours. We then scanned the parking lot again before leaving the store to go back to our car. She had a buddy system in place at her work, I had his picture hanging at the security desk at my school so he wasn't accidentally let into the building. We spent the whole entire month hiding, looking over our shoulders and with the constant lingering fear that he was going to come back.

Lori did everything in her power to keep herself and her children safe. She was in contact immediately with the police department. She was advised to file for a

restraining order. So she filed, and was granted, a temporary restraining order the day after she left her husband. Her first restraining order expired before her estranged husband could be found and served. Lori filed again and was granted a second, temporary restraining order. On May 7, 2014 the day before the hearing to make Lori's temporary restraining order permanent, her estranged husband broke into my parents home where Lori was staying. He shot and killed her. Lori was only 32 years old.

Lori knew her estranged husband owned a gun. At that time in Connecticut, he was under his legal rights to keep it. I am proud to say that loophole has been closed in Connecticut. But Connecticut's law alone would not have been enough to save her. The gun that he used was not the gun he already owned when he killed her. Her estranged husband went to Virginia, where he legally purchased a new gun. This is why it is so important to have this law on a federal level. This way abusers cannot evade the law by purchasing their guns in another state. The bill named after my sister would have made a difference, it would have saved her life. It's too late for Lori, but this law can and will make a difference in another family's story. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to share my story with you.