

Witness Statement

of

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In support of Kari's Law

Before The Subcommittee on Communication and Technology

The Energy and Commerce Committee

U.S. House of Representatives

Legislative hearing on H.R. 4167 Kari's Law Act of 2015

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Introduction

Good morning Chairman Walden, Vice Chairman Latta, Ranking Member Eshoo, and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Henry Hunt (Hank) and I am here today to discuss the Legislation titled H.R. 4167, Kari's Law Act of 2015. I intend to discuss this legislation with a knowledge gained over just the last 2½ years accompanied with a broken heart,

so if you will, bear with me if I stumble, and if I hesitate, please understand. When asked throughout my adult life what my greatest fear is, my answer has always been, “losing a child”. It is a genuine fear and one that makes all parents shiver and quickly change the subject. I eventually experienced that fear when my oldest daughter, Kari, was murdered in a horrific manner.

As of December 1, 2013, I can't change the subject anymore.

On that date, Kari Rene Hunt, aged 31, had separated from her husband of 10 years and had moved in with a sister in Marshall Texas which is approximately 67 miles from Lindale Texas where she and her husband were living. After about 8 years of increasingly abusive treatment from her husband she made the decision to stay with her sister and seek a divorce. This wasn't something she took lightly and after discussion with family decided this was best for her and her three children. Two girls aged 9 and 4 and a son aged 2. After about two weeks her husband asked to see the children for a few days and she agreed to let him visit them at a local hotel that he rented for several days. On Sunday, December 1, 2013 she agreed to take the children to him at the hotel and once arriving at the hotel she took the three children to the room he was staying in along with their belongings. After taking the children's things into the hotel room he convinced her to join him in the bathroom “for a cigarette”. Once inside the bathroom he tried to convince her to not go through with the divorce but when she refused he

began attacking her by stabbing and cutting her. As the struggle began she screamed to her oldest daughter to “call 911”. Her then 9 year old daughter began to dial 911 from the hotel room phone. A simple exercise to do, something taught to all children by parents, grand parents, Teachers, Firefighters, Police Officers, television shows and public service announcements. She did as instructed by the adults in her life and began to dial 911, she heard static, she hung up and dialed again, static, she hung up again and dialed again, static, she tried a fourth time, same result, nothing. Instead of hearing the words every person that dials 911 in an emergency anticipates hearing, “911, What is your emergency?” she heard her mother being murdered behind a hotel bathroom door. After realizing that dialing 911 was futile, she pushed her crying siblings into the hallway and sought help elsewhere. She finally found two hotel employees and after desperately trying to explain what was happening she realized the two employees did not speak English. She then began trying find help elsewhere and eventually another patron in the hotel responded to the commotion and was able to reach 911. Kari's husband ran, as most cowards do, and he demanded that the oldest girl get her brother and come with him, however, she pushed her brother behind her and in no uncertain terms let him know they weren't going with him. He then took the her younger sister and fled. After an extensive and nerve racking several hours and numerous Amber Alert alarms, he was apprehended and we were relieved to get our grand daughter

back unharmed. Kari died that day from her multiple wounds.

Her husband has stated that it took him about 5 minutes to do the damage he inflicted on Kari. 5 minutes, such a long time when you stare at a clock. Had the 911 call gone through, the response time would have been much less than the 5 minutes he spent murdering her. Would that have saved her? He stabbed her a total of 29 times in 5 minutes, if it had been three minutes..... I began a petition on change.org seeking Federal Legislation that would require that any phone, any where, any time connect with the appropriate Public Safety Answering Point when the digits 9-1-1 are dialed, without a prefix, postfix or any other combination of digits or letters other than 9-1-1. After almost 2 ½ years after Kari's death I have learned much about the telecommunications industry, met numerous people in the field that showed support toward my goal and as of today we have approximately 550,000 signatures and support from around the world. It's a simple fix, a software fix in most cases and something that is cost free and that cost should be passed to the customer. I have support from the National Emergency number Association, the American Hotel and Lodging Association, Verizon Corporation, Avaya Corporation, Conveyant Technologies, and the leadership of Suffolk County New York, The State of Illinois, The State of Maryland, The State of Texas, and the State of Tennessee. Legislation similar to Kari's Law has passed in Pennsylvania and Connecticut, with Kentucky, Colorado,

Nevada and Canada weighing the benefits of legislation that has garnered the moniker “it's a no brainer” from people around the globe. Kari's Law, as we ask, seeks three things; Direct dialing of 9-1-1 without a prefix, postfix or combination of numbers other than the three digits 9-1-1, On site notification where a MLTS system is installed shall also notify a central location within the facility where the system is installed when a person dials 911 from any extension, if that system is able to be configured. Kari's Law also seeks to require a waiver to any system not able to provide direct dialing or on site notification with a noticeable labeling on the phone informing any user there is a requirement to dial a prefix number before dialing 911 and what that prefix number may be. I ask that H.R. 4167, Kari's Law Act of 2015, be considered in order for any child in the future to be confident that should they need to call 9-1-1 for help, they will get it. There has been a few, VERY few people that appear to be seeking to make a profit from this law. That saddens me but it is to be expected from a tiny portion of the telecommunications industry. All in all, I have never seen more support for something that is in the public interest more than this legislation. I have been told, “Laws are created when Ethics fail”. This is not a new problem in the industry but only a few have applied the ethics to solve it on their own. I seek to change that with your help. Kari was my oldest daughter, I miss her terribly and I ask for your help.

I thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may

have.

