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**Statement for the Record
Submitted on February 9, 2021, to:**

**The House Subcommittee on
Antitrust, Commercial and Administrative Law**

For the Hearing Entitled:

Justice Denied: Forced Arbitration and the Erosion of our Legal System

February 11, 2021

My name is Valerie Haney and I am a former Scientologist who was a victim of abuse and human trafficking while trapped within Scientology and after I was able to escape I have been continuously and systematically stalked, harassed and threatened at the direction of Scientology.

I decided it was time to seek justice and fight back. I retained counsel and have a current case filed against Scientology in Los Angeles, CA.

To provide some context, I was born to Scientologist parents in 1979. From 1985 until 1991, from ages 5 – 12, I lived at the Church of Scientology's Spiritual Headquarters, or "Flag Land Base" in Clearwater, Florida. I also attended "school" in Clearwater, Florida where I was instructed on Scientology's practices, rather than being provided with the minimum compulsory education required under law.

From a young age, I was told what I could and could not say publicly about Scientology, and was taught never to question Scientology's teachings and practices. I could not speak publicly about Scientology without a direct order from another high-ranking member in Scientology. I was told that I could never go to the police and/or any government agency, because they were the enemy of Scientology. I was also not permitted to meet or speak with a "wog" (civilian) attorney.

As a Scientologist, I was told and raised to believe that I only had rights that were afforded to me by Scientology. I was never told or had any information that I was allowed to view regarding what rights I had as a citizen of the United States. I was made to "sign over" my rights to Scientology or else it would be a sin against the "Church."

Scientology brainwashed me so that I did not understand or appreciate that I had rights as an individual. I was educated in Scientology "schools." I was not taught that individuals outside of Scientology had rights afforded to them by the government and the law or that rights could come from any source but Scientology.

I was told that the police were hostile and enemies of and to Scientology and that "wog" (civilian) law enforcement was hostile to Scientology and that they could not and would not help me under any circumstances and that I would be punished by the Church for even attempting to speak with them.

Signing documents was a required and non-negotiable part of receiving any services or taking any position within Scientology. Being born into Scientology there was no option other than to sign whatever was put in front of me. I was never given a choice whether or not to sign any agreements, including any forced arbitration agreements. Every time I signed a document, it was in front of a high-ranking Scientology official. I was not permitted time to review any of these documents. The official who handed me these documents to sign would summarize the contents in their own words and I would then be required to sign with the official standing over me. If I took too long or attempted to read these documents, I would be told, "are you are done yet, just sign it." I sometimes asked if I could take these documents home with me to review and I was told that was "not possible."

In 1995 when I was 15 years old, I joined the Sea Org in Clearwater, Florida and in approximately 2002 or 2003 as a Sea Org member I moved to Gold Base, located in California. When I joined the Sea Org, I was forced to sign a “billion-year contract” dedicating my life to serving Scientology. From my arrival until my escape, I was forced to live in communal housing and subjected to laborious and back-breaking work for an average of 100 hours per week. I was paid less than fifty dollars per week.

I was verbally, physically, and psychologically restricted from leaving the Gold Base. I had little to no contact with family or friends, including my husband, throughout my time at Gold Base. Scientology was my sole source of security, survival, information and human contact. Scientology also heavily censored any and all of my communication with relatives, friends, and the outside world, including reading my mail and listening to my phone calls.

Eventually, I was sent to work on filming promotional videos for Scientology. The non-Scientologist actors hired for the promotional videos were my only “life-line” to the world outside Scientology.

In 2016, I submitted written requests to leave the Sea Org to my superiors seven times. All requests were denied. On one occasion, I was physically restrained and prevented from leaving. In November 2016, I learned that filming would be moved off Gold Base to a location where I would lose the non-Scientologist “life-line” to the outside world. I decided to make an escape attempt and hid in the trunk of an actor’s car to leave Gold Base. I was then able to reunite with my father.

My father, who was a Scientologist, encouraged me to return and complete the Church’s official exit procedure, known as “routing out.” The Church assured me this process would take no more than three weeks. Instead I was held for three months and again Scientology treated me like a prisoner. I was forced to do everything with a “handler,” including using the bathroom, showering, and sleeping. I was made to do videotaped interrogations in which I was forced to make false confessions about myself and provide false positive testimonials about my experiences with CSI.

During the routing out process, I was made to sign the departure documents in a room with only Scientology’s general counsel and a man armed with a gun. I do not know the contents of any of the documents I signed. I was not given copies of the documents. I signed any document that was given to me because I just wanted it to be over and to get out of there.

It was under these conditions that I was coerced to sign agreements with the Church of Scientology, under the constant threat of imprisonment. I was not given time to read the agreements before I signed them and I signed agreements with Scientology, particularly the Staff Departure Release Agreement, because I was desperate to escape Scientology and I would be further punished or imprisoned if I did not comply.

I never had any opportunity or chance to negotiate any of the terms of the arbitration agreements or any documents that I signed while a Scientologist.

Moreover, if you speak about Scientology in any way that Scientology deems negative, regardless of the truth, you are deemed a suppressive person and an enemy of Scientology. As such, if this case is arbitrated by a panel of Scientologists there is no way that I will receive a fair, unbiased and neutral panel of individuals who will decide my case in arbitration. Instead, the panel chosen will be Scientologists who have been trained and taught by Scientology that any person who speaks out, regardless of the truth, is evil and a sinner. It will be in that light and with those biases that I will “judged” when I am forced by the court to engage in what even the Judge has said is forced “religious arbitration.”

Currently the California Courts are enforcing the forced religious arbitration decide the circumstances described above. I will be forced to reenter a Scientology building be judged by Scientologists despite being a victim of numerous crimes. In other words, I am being forced by the judicial system to be revictimized by going through religious arbitration which is known in Scientology as a committee of evidence. This is yet another way that Scientology attempts to silence those they have victimized and wronged. The psychological warfare and damage that Scientology has already done to me has resulted in me being diagnosed with PTSD and me having to see a trauma specialist for the abuse I endured and have continued to endure. A court subjecting me to this torture again is inhumane.

I humbly ask that Congress pass the FAIR Act so that victims and those wronged by large organizations like Scientology and others will have a voice and be properly judged by a jury of their peer with a fair and neutral judge presiding over the case. Again, I urge you to pass the FAIR Act to restore equal access to justice for people like me.