



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AARON HERMANSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: aaron.d.hermanson@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 11:54 PM

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I was at Agape from early 2009 to August 2011. During my time there I was "restrained" twice. The first time on the first week I was there. I was attacked by a staff member and defended myself and was beaten down for hours on a gravel road on the compound. During this I was punched, kicked, elbowed, kneed, and molested. I had my head picked up and slammed into the gravel several times. When I finally got up and was forced to walk while I could barely stand. James Clemensen was standing there. With an evil smirk on his face he said, "I bet you'll never do that again." I was again "restrained" on my 17th birthday because I was demanding that I get to make a phone call because I was 17 and I wanted to get the hell out of there. James Clemenen ordered that staff members take me to the intake room and restrain me. So I was taken down their and was made to do physical exercise until I was unable to it anymore and I was tackled and restrained for not complying with their orders. So a "restraint" at Agape is a literal beat down. They also do a thing that is called a self restraint, which the person just lays on the floor face down, but staff members will walk by and kick that person in different areas on their body. I have not personally had that happen to me, but I have witnessed several of them. Public humiliations was also something they would do. So they would have brown town student duck walk through the shower bay in their boxers and make the other students look at them and laugh. Students that didn't watch and laugh would get punished for it. Normally having to join in with brown town for the night or other punishments. There was times that I was refused medical help on several different times. I ended up passing out before they took me to the doctor, I was sick and also was dehydrated from not getting enough water. During rock hauling crews you were denied water breaks, but that is not all, even during meals water was limited. Everything there at Agape is abuse physical, emotional, mental, verbal, and even the education or I should say the lack there of. The lasting effects of being there I do not fully know, But I am in therapy today for PTSD and I had to teach myself things that people learn in high school while I was trying to get my bachelor's degree.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AIMEE GROVES		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: grovesaimee7@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 11:16 AM
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My name is aimee groves. I attended mountain park baptist boarding academy, agape boarding school, and refuge of grace girls academy now called wings of faith. Besides being one of the students victimized by the restraining procedures (16 people held me down for 8 hours by my pressure points) a.d a victim of the psychological abuse and religious cult like mentality, I am a survivor of the abuse. I am 33 years old and still wake up w terrors that I'm trapped back there. Being forced to inflict discipline n punishments on my friends I also witnessed some of the physical abuse. For example extreme workouts till people threw up and thwn forced to eat their own vomit. My biggest issue is the lack mw tal Healthcare. Most of these teens comes from traumatic backgrounds and have no way to process what has happened to them. There is Noone safe talking to. U never know what is going to b used against u. Thwy teach thwre is no such thing as mental illness. They teach that it's a Jesus problem and u need more Jesus. No these precious and already traumatized n victimized children need someone who will b a voice for them. At these schools u literally have to pretend to be someone else in ordwr to survive. So many of us survivors are so far behind in life because we were never taught basic life skills. The sex abuse that is being covered up is sickening. I personally helped protect one student from a staff at circle of hope qhile staff there for one month. There are countless stories of molestation and rapes. What can we do to better protect these children? The future of our country? We have to make sure we know what all schools exist. Background check requirements are a must. These places are breeding grounds for offenders. These children should be able to b questioned by social workers without a staff member present. They aren't going to tell the truth with a staff there bc if they do it will get worse for them. The punishment takes like bwi g on the wall or brown town or being restrained or basic rights that being able to speak may get taken away. I personally wasn't allowed to speak for over a year. I spent a total of 5.5 yrs in these schools. Escaped n ran away because of the rape culture this religion encourages. These schools need someone to hold them accountable. I cant believe how many years it has taken to get this far. These schools started in 1950s in tx n found safe haven in mo after being kicked out of around 8 diff states. No person should have to live w my trauma and need the therapy I need to overcome what these evil ones hungry child abusers have inflicted on me. Just bc I was a troubled teen didn't mean I deserved to b traumatized and treated as less than and like I didn't deserve to be alive. No child should hear people at these schools tell them they aren't lo ed by anyone and that's why they r sent there. Sorry for ruling. Thank u for listening. I could go on n on esp after being trapped in these torture chambwrs for 5 yrs. The lies thwy tell the parents are unbelievable. They had my own family scared I was going to KILL them if I was ever left alone w them again. They shouldn't have the power to destroy ad many lives as they have. The amount of former students we have lost due to suicide and drug overdoses bc of the trauma and trying g to forget the hell we survived. Cptsd from these places is extremely real and prevalent. Anyways thanks again for ur time

and reading this.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALLEN KNOLL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA O'BRIEN/HOUSEHOLDER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARA MANZIN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: arajaren@yahoo.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 5:47 PM
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Thank you for gathering today to hear our stories and to consider legislation that protects children. Although my experience did not occur in the state of Missouri, it is eerily uncanny how similar the stories of survivors are from programs all across the nation. In 1998 I was sent to Spring Ridge Academy (SRA) in Mayer, Arizona against my will. My father, facing the recent death of my mother, was at a loss for how to help his teenage daughter, who was struggling with grief and depression. A local educational consultant recommended a "therapeutic boarding school." Though I was only there for 6 months, I experienced or was aware of; punitive forced labor, solitary confinement/shunning, refusal of proper medical care, withholding of food/water/bathroom access, sexual molestation and rape of a child by a staff member. The facility controls all communications and correspondence and prevents children from calling for help. The child is punished for attempting to do so either through forced silence, extending the duration of stay, and removal of meager privileges. If a child attempts to give any negative feedback about their experience via monitored phone calls, parents are told they are lying and manipulating them. Children are not be able to freely report abuse to parents or the authorities. The program I attended misrepresented the qualifications of staff and "therapists". They were and are ill-equipped to deal with the extensive range of conditions they purport to specialize in such as eating disorders and various psychiatric disorders. I personally was treated by an unlicensed therapist. Though I had been diagnosed and treated regularly by a psychiatrist prior to my arrival for panic and anxiety disorder, depression and insomnia, I only saw a licensed psychiatrist once during my stay. This doctor removed all of the medications I was taking and instead "treated" me with a homeopathic regimen, resulting in terrible withdrawal symptoms and severe panic and anxiety attacks for which I was subsequently punished and accused by staff and peers of "faking to get attention". I also sustained an injury (accidentally inflicted by a peer) when my hand was crushed in a slammed door. I was taken to the ER by SRA staff and was told I had soft tissue and tendon damage and would need regular physical therapy in order to maintain range of motion and ensure proper healing. The staff never followed up with my injury, I was never taken to physical therapy and I now suffer limited range of motion and disfigurement in my left pinkie. Many of the seminars, or "trainings" as the program refers to them, involve unlicensed current and past students/parents in a supposedly "therapeutic" facilitation role. These highly secretive "trainings", the essence of their program, are common to many behavior modification programs. They involve non-evidence based cult-like tactics that have evolved from a long lineage of seminars utilized by many questionable organizations including Synanon and Lifespring. My program's training sessions utilized attack therapy, forced emoting and limited food, sleep, and bathroom breaks to create heightened stress. A child's performance in these seminars dictated much of their progress in the leveled program. Children would often be compelled to lie or invent past traumas in order to be viewed as successfully "working the program" and thus hopefully advance towards leaving the facility. Thank you for giving us the chance to tell our story. I've been

reluctant over the years because I know that some of the abuse others experienced was far worse however, as a result of my time there, I have PTSD, irreparable family relationships, trust issues, and nightmares to this day.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: ArnieDienoff@Yahoo.Com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:22 AM
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I am in Support of this BillIt Mandates that "Child Residential Homes" to Notify the Department of Social Services and to conduct background checks on all employees.This is very similar to HB-557



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BARB PATTERSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BRETT WILLIAM HARPER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: brettwilliamharper@Outlook.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:02 AM
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I, Brett Harper, was physically, psychologically, and verbally abused at Agape Boarding School between the years of 1999-2003. As a result of the abuse suffered I now have PTSD, Major Depressive Disorder and have had sciatica and a fissured (ripped) disc since age 18. I am 35 now. Agape Boarding School ruined my life. Within just a few short months after attending Agape I was forced to quit college. I abandoned any hope I had playing college basketball for COCC. Depressed, in agonizing pain, alone, and still suffering from mental illnesses I didn't know I had I began to drink and that drinking only made my life that much worse. I found it difficult to find employment and when I did find it I often didn't last long. Unable to work a lot of places due to my back has limited my income and destroyed my social life in many ways. I'm simply unable to do what most men my age can and haven't been able to throughout my prime. I'm left feeling like less of a man and like my life has been robbed from me. I just completed my 2nd back surgery in less than two years. I'm looking at months of recovery. I have a disability hearing March 18th. I am now a burden on my cousin who has his own disabilities. Unfortunately I have nowhere else to go. It makes me so depressed I, a grown man at the age of 35, sometimes cry myself to sleep. If I can sleep. Every night I'm haunted, stuck back in the boarding school, unable to tell family what is really going on as they monitor all phone calls and letters. I am sometimes stuck there for what seems like an eternity. It feels like I'm stuck in a time prison. It's usually the same nightmare over and over again. Hard work out in the fields around Agape. My back hurts. There's no water for another hour. I'm dizzy with the heat beating down on me. I'm reliving my trauma every night. My cousin says I scream and I've woke up contorted, sweaty, panting or gasping for breath. I often stop breathing in my sleep due to sleep apnea as well so this makes this even more dangerous. Over the years I've struggled to get the professional mental health I needed because counselors reminded me of being trapped at Agape where people were there to "help you" and called themselves "counselors". I am proud to say I have a good counselor now and have for several years and have been sober for 20 mo. But I am LUCKY! So many of those who went to school with me see not and have committed suicide or couldn't handle life outside so they are in and out of jail or prison. So many didn't escape their pain and trauma. For those no longer with us like Joseph Barbette may they RIP. At Agape I saw dangerous physical restraints that use pressure points used. We were denied medical care when we needed it and there was no state licensed teachers, counselors, or professionals anywhere. The only thing they had was a small, almost closet sized infirmary with a guy who essentially played doctor. Very rarely could we go see the doctor in town who married to the owners daughter. We were told if we said anything about abuse we would get it when we returned. For the most part I avoided being restrained but I was shoved around a few times. Staff occasionally out their knee on our low backs to make push ups harder. This and all the hard labor without much water is what most likely broke my back. There is so much I could say about Agape and I will leave that for my book. I run a non profit called Spare the Rod. I am based out of Portland Oregon. My goal is to warn parents and legislators about the dangers of

these places before it's too late and more end up like me for the rest of their lives. Please consider this bill as a very small step. We need more steps to be taken to protect children but let's at least draw the line here. Thank you.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHANEL MARE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: runawaylove04@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 8:37 PM
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My name is Chanel Maré I went to Circle of Hope Girls Ranch from 2006-2010 I am a British Citizen and what happened to me at this place and what I witnessed will never leave the nightmares in my head.I moved to Vegas in 2006 I got woken up at 4am in the morning by two escourters at the end of my bed forcing me to go with them restraining and picking me up to take me to the airport as I was screaming for my life because I didn't know what was going on and if this was real... I still think to this day that I am not safe when I am asleep thinking I am going to be taken away against my own will having this repeating nightmare is just only the beginning...I can tell you every literally every detail every smell and everything that happened to me at this place of hell I wish it would leave my mind but it won't I tried for years after leaving.When we drove up to this place in the middle of Humansville Missouri and I was forced to walk up to Boyd Householders office door and he answered it and it was like I was still in a dream I didn't think this was real. He told me about the shirt colour system and the rules of this place of hell. I also got stripped searched like a criminal my clothes taken away and forced to wear long skirts and a t shirt that was second hand.We were not allowed to talk to anyone unless it was important aka if the place was burning down. We were not allowed to look anybody. We got weighed every morning and because I was over weight when I got there I got put on half portions and had to drink 3 glasses of water before each meal and I got half of the food of everyone else. I was about 160 pounds when I got there and when I left I was 100 pounds. We also did slave labour all day no school work even if we did do school work it was with the program ACE and you find out when you leave it doesn't go towards your GED so it's pointless. Working outside was hard work from picking weeds and not allowed to go on your knees only allowed to crouch and trying to do that for hours and if you go on your knees you will get push-ups. Push-ups can range from 10-50 from other students that are higher shirts Boyd Householder can give as many as he likes he could just leave you in push-up position and sometimes forget you are there if you fell you would get restrained. Other students normally the bigger ones like me would get called and forced to do the restraining if you didn't restrain you would get restrained yourself. This is when Boyd would push you from the back of your neck to the ground and 3 -4 other students would jump on you, pushing all your pressure points at the back of your arms and the back of knees you would be there for half hour to several hours screaming for mercy I can still hear the screaming to this day. While this was happening Boyd and Stephanie would be mimicking you and kissing eachother like this was all a game. I got restrained because I didn't want to read the KJV bible I was catholic before I got sent to Circle of Hope and being forced to read a bible and being forced to accept Jesus as my saviour because if you didn't you were not right with God then you were not in Boyds good books that means you were not going up those shirt colours that means you got treated like what would he say a black shirt the lowest of shirts was only on this earth to breathe, eat if you were lucky work and read the bible and you didn't want that. We went to Berean Baptist Church Springfield on Wednesdays and Sunday's forced to participate and listen to their sermons we would sit

at the front we were not allowed to talk to anyone unless people came up to us we were not allowed to say anything negative about Circle of Hope otherwise we would be a black shirt. We were not allowed to look at boys because that was worldly and we are sinners and would get punished if we did that. Pastor Ables knew what was going on but because we were troubled teens he thought we deserved it. Scheduled bathroom breaks you had no privacy and you were only allowed 3 sheets of toilet paper if you were urinating and 4 if you were going bowel movement and if you didn't go bowel movement in 3 days you would be forced to take milk of magnesia. One girl because she needed the toilet more than once every hour got taken to Boyds office she was forced to drink pitchers of water jog on the spot she then wet herself and was restrained for not holding it in. 5 min showers that was getting undressed, shower and get dressed all under 5 mins if you didn't you would get a cold shower the next day and push ups. You were not allowed to say if you were still hungry otherwise you were forced to eat bowl upon bowl of plain oatmeal a few girls threw up because they couldn't eat more and then they were forced to eat there own vomit I saw them lying in the living room floor because their stomach hurt so bad for eating too much. Boyd also got a certain girl to massage his head at night time as he watched tv. We were not allowed to listen or watch anything from the outside world we were secluded if it wasn't anything to do with the KJV then it wasn't allowed. When I was there a girl slept with a staff member Ron Sheldon we got told that our family members were going to be told and found out later they were told nothing and she was under age and Boyd had not told authorities. We couldn't tell authorities what was happening at Circle of Hope because everything was monitored every phonecall and letter if we said anything negative then our phonecall or letters would be stopped so there was no way of us telling anyone in the outside world what was going on. The list can go on it is very traumatising what happened to me at Circle of Hope it's the re occurring nightmare that will never stop and no child should have to go through what we went through I ran away in 2010 and hitchhiked 1400 miles across America there was an amber alert out for me and America's most wanted missing person but were looking for me I did everything I can and didn't care what danger I was putting myself through because i didn't want to go back to the hell hole that I went through while being there you had to be a robot you had to have a smile on your face you couldn't have any say in what was going on otherwise you would be punished and living like that for 4 years still takes a toll to this day because you find it hard to live in society you didn't know anything about anymore. I have panic attacks on a daily basis I can't sleep I can't trust authority because every person in my life that was meant to make me safe as a child has failed me. I don't know how to express my emotions because for so long I had to hide what I was really feeling because I didn't want to be punished. I battle working because I am scared to do something wrong and my boss have a go at me. I have been diagnosed with PTSD from this place. You failed me America. Your such a beautiful country it shame that these places are allowed to be open but what happened to me there still 11 years later I cannot erase the trauma I have and many others have experienced it's heartbreaking and something needs to be done to these places so the next generation feel safe. P.S. my grammar & syntax is a testament to 4yrs of ACE only education. May we have Zoom moving forward please. Chanel Mare



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: COLTON SCHRAG		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: coltonschrag@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/8/2021 9:49 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DANNY VO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: dannyvo34@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 7:12 PM	
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My name is Danny Vo. I am a survivor of the trouble teen industry. When I was 13 yr old, I was sent away to a wwasp program in Jamaica call Tranquility Bay where I spend 10 months in 03 to 04. I was taken away from my home by 2 strangers who were escort transporter hired by my parent to transport me to Jamaica. When I first arrived, I was strip search, forced to shower before getting my uniform and my head was shaved. The program was advertise as a program that was suppose to help trouble teen. I was cutting class, hanging out with the wrong crowd, and had anger issues and my parents wanted to get me help. And as the program advertise, my parent thought I was getting the help that I needed but that was not the case. My first night, I witness students sleeping in the hallway with the lights on because they were on punishment instead of sleeping in the dorms. I witness a student with cuts that covered both his whole arms because he was cutting himself with razor blades hoping that his parents would take him home. I would hear kids screaming because they were getting restraint and this was a normal thing. Everyday you can hear kids screaming. The way the staffs would restraint us is they would have 4 to 5 staffs take you down and drag you into a room and each staffs would have there knee on the kids' elbow and they would bend your elbow back to inflict pain and this would go on for hours. We were not allow to talk to another students or even make eye contact the whole time we were there. I was put in isolation multiple times where I had to lay down on my face from morning to bed time and then I could get off that position to go to bed and I would be in that position for a week straight while there are students that would be in that position for 9 months straight or more. We showered outdoor everyday and we're lucky if there was any water left, otherwise we would have to pour water in a bucket and washed ourselves. We also hand washed all our clothes 2 times a week. Every once in awhile, I would hear about a student trying to commit suicide, myself included at one point and we were not helped. We were taken to isolation for punishment when all we wanted was help. Our parents were not aware of what was happening either because our letters were read and probably never got send out. For 10 months, I was not allowed any phone call and the students that was allowed phone calls because they have moved up in the program, their phone calls were closely monitor and they were not allowed to speak anything negative about the program or they would hang up the phone and the students would be punish afterward whether it taken to isolation or restraint. On March 2004, my parents decided to take me home because I was falling behind in my school work there since the education there was reading out of a textbook and taking a test after each chapter which I struggle with because there were no staff members that would help me if I needed it or they were not educated. The program made me worse when I got home because of the trauma I had endured and at the time I was 14 yr old and did not realize how that affect me then. I went back to doing the same thing I was doing that got me send away the first time but reality I just needed help. In September 2005, at 16 yr old, 2 strangers came into my room in the middle of the night and woke me up and took me away again. This time I was being transported to Missouri to a boarding school call Agape Boarding School (Agape Boy

Ranch). My experience at Agape Boarding School was different from Tranquility Bay. I did not experience the physical abuse like I did in Jamaica but I was mentally abuse but there are students that was physically abuse at Agape. I was forced to endure 3 weeks of boot camp when I first arrived. They would have us do intense workout from morning to night time with very minimal break and water break. I witness students who were out of shape and if they could not keep up with the workout, they would get punished for it. The staffs there seem to love torturing us and these are grown men while we were just kids. Religion was forced upon us since they were an independent fundamental baptist church and school. We did not have a choice so we were forced to read our bible every morning and every night before bed and force to memorize versed. We were force to do manual labors around the ranch in the hot Missouri weather and cold weather in the winter. For punishment, they did not have isolation but they have a table called the no talking table and students were forced to sit down and look down at their bible from morning til night. They can be in this position for weeks or months. Or we would have to stand on the wall for weeks from morning to night. And they would punish us for anything. I was put on the wall because I needed to use the restroom in the middle of the night and that was not allow after light out. Staff would verbally abuse us on a daily basis. They would talk down on us rather than helping us be better and that take on a lot of tolls on mental health issues. Every kids is different and some have special needs and there are a lot of former students in these type of schools that do not do well after leaving the program and many have commit suicide also. I myself have struggle and still are after all these years. I still have nightmares about being send back. And just when I think I'm doing fine, I still get triggered by anything that remind me of being back at one for these programs. To whom it may concern, I hope you take this testimony along with the testimonies of other survivors that these schools and program get regulated. These are children and they need help, they need counseling, guidance and prepare them for the future. They do not deserve to get tortured as punishment. These children are the future and as children, their brain are still developing and all they need is help even when they don't realize it yet.



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COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVID BOWSHER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVID BRYAN PATTERSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: hokeypokey722@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 5:51 PM
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As a gay student sent to Agape Boarding School in 2002 I can only relate my time there as being synonymous to conversion therapy. There was daily preaching from behind the pulpit of "Stop burning the American Flag and start burning Fags." I was told I was a worthless degenerate, that was only going to end up in prison or dead. Before arriving at Agape I was an honor roll student the worst thing I had done was smoke pot once and drank once in the same night. My parents inability to navigate their own divorce and child rearing and my coming out as gay would be the ultimate reason why I was sent to Agape Bording School. I was police escorted there by off duty cops. Waking me up at 4:30 in the morning telling me "we can do this the easy way or the hardway" while showing me a pair of handcuffs. They picked out my clothes and made me wear a belt backwards in case they needed to handcuff me to myself, and made me wear a "transport boot" a shoe you would get if you had a broken foot and a cast to walk in. To inhibit myself from running away if I tried. Upon arriving in Agape I was strip searched naked in a room full of grown men id never seen before and then I was taken to get my head shaved. I would be restrained multiple times for not conforming and submitting to the schools strange and often times peculiar interpretations of the Bible. One example a preacher said that music was Satan's gift to educate the world. This confused me for years because I had always been passionate about music and the trauma of this sermon haunted me well into my early adult years. Other boys knew I was gay and would come on to me both physically and sexually while I was there. When staff found out I was treated as some sort of vile leper. Once being forcibly tucked into my bed so tight that I could not even roll over and sleep on my side. I was treated as less than and as if I was sub human when word got out about my being gay.They monitored and censored our mail and phonecalls. Using black sharpie to take out parts of our letters both sent and received mail. Hanging up our calls when they heard us talk about something they didn't want out. When the tornado happened our phonecalls were not monitored and I was able to tell my mom just how crazy, harmful, and insane Agape is. She started the process to get custody of me. My dad knowing our phonecalls were monitored he wanted me to only have a phonecall with the court mediator. My mom pushed to get me out to California. I spoke with the court mediator for hours and he recommended and deemed that "going back to Agape boarding school would be detrimental to my mental health". He was absolutely right. Upon leaving agape my mother woke me up by turning the lights on common practice at agape however this time at home in California I woke up and put on my agape uniform and stood at my own bedroom door with my Bible. Thats when my mom and I knew something was seriously wrong with my mental health due to the trauma of being forcibly sent away to Agape Boarding school. The PTSD, the night terrors, fear of abandonment would plague me well into my twenties. For nearly eleven years I had the same reoccurring night terror trying to run away from agape only to be caught and to wake up screaming in terror gasping for air and covered in sweat. Please don't allow these schools to operate in your great state. Please have social services on sight monitoring 24/7 independent agencies to review

state guidelines and policies of child residential facilities and above all else if you love your child please do not send them there.



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INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DEIRDRE SUGIUCHI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: dresugi@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 7:56 AM
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When I was fifteen, my parents sent me to Escuela Caribe, a fundamentalist Christian reform school in the Dominican Republic. At this school students were forced to exercise for punishment, sometimes until they vomited or collapsed from exhaustion. Students were beaten with a leather strap for minor infractions. Staff members would slam students into the wall if they thought we were out of line. It was a school where students of color were punished more severely than white students, a school where it was taught that homosexuality was immoral, equated with pedophilia or bestiality, and a school where we girls were taught that having sexual feelings meant we were whores. My fundamentalist Christian reform school, Escuela Caribe, was a branch of Indiana's New Horizons Youth Ministries. The above recollection is only a snapshot of the ways that my peers and I were physically, sexually and emotionally abused in the name of religion. I have written essays for Huffington Post, Dame Magazine, Religion Dispatches, the anthology Empty the Pews: Stories of Leaving the Church about the trauma I suffered from my experience at an unregulated religious reform school. I also have maintained a blog, Unreformed, for over a decade, and am in the process of completing a memoir. These schools need to be overseen by appropriate departments.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DR. MELINDA GURR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mgurr@semo.edu	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 2:43 PM
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My name is Dr. Melinda Gurr, and I am a professor at Southeast Missouri State University. I am also a survivor of the troubled teen industry, and had the pleasure of meeting survivors of Circle of Hope and Agape last November. I spent almost four years in and out of a horrific residential facility in Utah. I thought this was a Utah problem. I've since learned of the stories here, in my new state, and I am truly appalled. Beyond the most blatant cases of violence (restraint, physical punishment, sexual assault), children in these programs are systematically denied from a proper education. I heard of cases of young people being kept years past the age of 18, of countless individuals whose college funds were squandered. I am horrified that organizations would claim that their religious affiliation should excuse them from state oversight. This is truly appalling. We've heard of students being held in dog cages, being forced to eat their own vomit, starved, and living in squalid conditions (without heat, air conditioning, water). Without background checks, these facilities attract abusers. Under the current law, there is no way to know the scale of this problem. This is unacceptable and out of step with contemporary sensibilities. Children deserve the state's protection. They deserve the right to leave at-will. They do not deserve to be treated and traded like chattel. They deserve phone calls to abuse hotlines, and the freedom to report without fears of retaliation. It should not have taken an undercover video of a beating inside a facility and a Tiktok campaign to shut down Circle of Hope. We, survivors, have been telling our stories for years. These programs are extremely dangerous. Children don't deserve a lifetime of trauma. They deserve a decent education that provides them with opportunities and choices. In short, there is absolutely no excuse, religious or otherwise, for child abuse.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELIZA LAMM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: eliiza@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 6:52 PM

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info@makinwellness.com February 19, 2021?To Whom It May Concern: Your credentials: I am a licensed professional counselor in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and a nationally certified counselor. I am also the founder & CEO of Makin Wellness, Pennsylvania's #1 Online Therapy Platform. Our therapists specialize in mental health, addiction & relationship research-backed treatment. I personally specialize in co-occurring mental health and addiction cognitive behavioral therapy & have worked in the field of psychology for over 10 years. I also authored a book regarding teenage depression called, "From Depression To Joy: A Parent's Handbook For Teenage Wellness". Before I launched Makin Wellness in 2017, I worked as a research associate at Duquesne University and did clinical & research work at a non-profit called Resources for Human Development at their mental health and addiction residential treatment facility in Homestead, PA. What is the importance of professional therapy/counseling for 'troubled teenagers'? It is my clinical experience that "troubled teenagers" need counseling. If there are large behavioral changes and concerns, it would benefit the teen to be in treatment. A licensed professional counselor or social worker can provide guidance on how the teen can improve. It is best for the teen to be cautious, seek out help and follow the therapist's treatment plan. The following signs below should trigger professional help immediately :

- Depression
- Running away
- Participation in any type of illegal or dangerous activity
- Substance or alcohol use
- Poor academic performance
- Promiscuous behavior
- Any type of self-harm
- Changes in friend groups
- No longer participating in sports / academic activities
- Challenges with eating
- Defiance
- Noticeable changes in mood
- Projection of anger

Troubled teens who are suffering from mental health or addiction problems find greater results in treatment when they enroll in counseling sooner rather than later. What is the importance of professional therapy/counseling for addicts? Research-backed treatment is imperative in overcoming addiction. Addiction impacts people from a psychological and physical level. If they have a physical dependence on a substance, going to an inpatient detox facility will help them safely wean off drugs and alcohol. This, however, is only the beginning of a long process addicts must go through to prevent relapse and effectively manage cravings. Cognitive-behavioral therapy and motivational interviewing are modalities of treatment that are proven to help addicts stay clean. This type of counseling also helps to treat underlying mental health conditions that typically occur congruently with drug & alcohol abuse. What is the importance of professional family counseling? The goal of family counseling is to assist families through challenges and hard times in a way where it helps the family cope and become stronger. Family counseling typically starts when there is a stressor that is impacting everyone. Letting go is also a common theme in family counseling. Family counseling helps to improve relationships, communication, and the overall functioning of the family unit. Is reading or memorizing the Bible, or

any other type of religious teachings, sufficient enough or equal to professional, medical help for those who may suffer from addiction, emotional distress, mental disorders such as bipolar, clinical depression, anxiety, etc.? Based upon my ten years of clinical and research experience, I've noticed that memorizing a Bible and religious teachings may benefit the patient slightly if they identify with the faith. This, however, does not replace professional medical help and should not be used as treatment. If someone is suffering from a mental health concern, they need to meet with a licensed mental health provider who specializes in the diagnosis they need help with. If someone breaks their arm, they shouldn't be reading the Bible, but going to the emergency room. Religious figures and teachings are not scientific and will not help someone heal from mental health or addiction conditions. It's imperative that they see a specialized licensed provider who has years of education and experience in treating those types of conditions. What is the importance of diagnosis and medication? •

Diagnosis in the mental health and addiction realm will reveal information that will patient and clinical with effective treatment. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) highly endorses patients to get a psychiatric assessment so they can be properly diagnosed. This diagnosis allows licensed healthcare providers and patients to work together & create a treatment plan. Diagnoses also allow mental health and addiction providers to choose the most effective form of treatment. •

Prescribed medications play a vital role in the treatment of mental health and addiction concerns. They help with reducing symptoms, preventing relapses, and minimizing cravings. Medication should be used in conjunction with evidence-based therapy for the patient to experience the best results. Additional information? Religious guidance is not synonymous with medically trained mental health & addiction treatment protocols. Those struggling with mental health and addiction concerns particularly will benefit from research-backed counseling and medication management. Sincerely submitted, Sara Makin, M.S.Ed., LPC, NCC Licensed Professional Counselor in PA Nationally Certified Counselor License Number: PC010315 Date of Report: February 9th, 2021



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: EMILY ADAMS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: EMILY VAN SCHENKHOF		PHONE NUMBER: 573-826-0031	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: CHILDRENS TRUST FUND (CTF)		TITLE: DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 301 W. HIGH STREET			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ERIC SKWARCZYNSKI		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: preacherboysdoc@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 4:05 AM
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To whom it may concern, I'm not a survivor of the troubled teen industry. But I am a friend of many. As a podcast host, I've sat across from several individuals who - as children - were severely abused, beaten, or sexually assaulted in the very places that claimed to be shelter. Homes that advertised themselves to be places of treatment and rehabilitation instead were places that inflicted emotional, physical, and spiritual damages. Much of this could have been avoided had there simply been some basic oversight. I do not wish to take away the rights of others to practice their religious beliefs freely. Nor would I want my rights to practice my beliefs freely. But hear me loud and clear, there should be NO religious exemption for abuse. The more I learn about the troubled teen industry, the more brightly I want the spotlight to shine on it. Physical, mental, and sexual abuse against minors is shockingly commonplace in many of these "Christian" homes. And to be very clear, I don't write this as someone with a vendetta against the Church at large. Let me be clear... I speak as a follower of Jesus Christ. As a Christian, I believe that the Bible teaches us to respect the dignity of all human beings, to be advocates for legal justice, and to expose the sin of corrupt leaders - like those who run these homes - publicly so that, as 1 Timothy 5:20 says, others like them will stand in fear. We must recognize that all children are made in the image of God and deserve our protection. We must be advocates for legal justice on behalf of those image bearers who have been violated mentally, physically, or sexually. We must shine the brightest spotlight we can muster on the abuse of the troubled teen industry. I urge you... protect the weakest in our society. There must be no religious exemption for abuse.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: GABRIEL MILLER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: 12gabemiller@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 8:25 AM	
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I was abused at Agape Boarding School in 2017. I was restrained for nearly 4 hours on my first day. They took me to the ground because I refused to allow them to cut my hair. This restraint involved four full grown men on my body; one elbowing my head, two digging into my outer biceps with elbows, and one on my legs. My parents did not find out about this restraint until recently as the school had not told them what had really happened. I received a concussion and 14 stitches in my head from another student at the school because of poor oversight. When I needed these stitches removed, they did not take me to the hospital to get them removed; one of the untrained staff members pulled them out prematurely and I still have a scar on my head as a result. Agape Boarding school would deny kids water if they didn't like them. They could pull you out of school for months at a time to do workouts. The staff members there would take us to a concrete storm shelter and turn the lights out. I remember in these times in the shelter getting punched in the face. I don't know who was doing the punching but I do know the staff liked seeing the weaker kids suffer. I wouldn't be telling this story if I had any academic success at Agape but that is not the case. As a Christian, I think it is despicable the way that they force their version of the Bible on people. They made me afraid that I was not really saved and I required to be baptized into their church for my religion to be verified. It took months of counseling to get over the mental, physical, and spiritual abuse that I received at Agape. As a now-adult resident of Missouri, these laws must change. This is a non-partisan issue, it doesn't matter what you believe. Christians people like me can and will abuse people without minimum oversight.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HALEY HOMPSTEAD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: fireflies222222@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 11:48 AM
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I was sexually, psychologically and physically abused at Change Academy Lake of the Ozarks over the course of 3 years I was imprisoned there as a teen. I was repeatedly sexually assaulted by a staff member and then blamed for the assaults by the previous owner and staff. Without the testimony of women not associated with CALO my abuser would not have been arrested and would have continued to be employed by the company. Government oversight and regulation would prevent children from being abused by these residential schools in the future.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JAMES GRIFFEY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: griffeyaudiosolutions@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 5:07 PM

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I already submitted a statement for Bill 557. But I will paste the same statement here as well since I support both Bills. Thank you. I was a student at Agape Boarding School in Stockton Missouri from 1998-2001 and then was a staff member from 2001-2002, My first night at Agape as a 15 year old kid I was in the dorms getting ready for the evening when I was given push-ups (which was a generic punishment that was handed out for breaking any rules). I was not able to do all the push-ups given to me, and my arms were collapsing underneath me. I was brought up to the adult staff member that was running the dorm and he was told that I was refusing to do my push-ups. I tried to explain that my arms were giving out underneath me and I couldn't do them. He didn't care, he told me to do more push-ups. I complied and once again my arms collapsed after a few push-ups. When I collapsed I uttered the word "Gosh." The adult staff member got in my face and yelled at me saying "You cannot say that here, that is using my God's name in vain! Do more push-ups!" I didn't understand what was going on but I got down and started to try and do more push-ups. My arms collapsed again and the words "Gosh dang it" came out of my mouth. I sat back on my knees immediately and covered my mouth and said "Oh man, I am so sorry." At that moment the adult staff member pounced at me throwing me on my back while he straddled my mid torso, and he began to punch me in the face and head-butt me in my face. And while he was doing this he was yelling "I told you not to use my God's name in vain!" It took 3 other adult staff members to get him off me. I was then escorted down to the bathroom to clean the blood off my face. No report was taken, my parents were not told of the incident, the staff member was not written up or punished, and he continued to harass me. He would walk by me in the dorm and cock his arm back with his fist clenched like he was going to hit me and then laugh as I coward away. And this was all within my 1st week at Agape. I tell this story to provide a detailed description of something I experienced personally at Agape and so you understand that when abuse is talked about at these programs, it isn't just some of us exaggerating a childhood memory of a staff member being mean to us. Real, unregulated abuse is happening in these programs. The kids are being silenced and are not able to give their parents or the authorities any kind of hints. These programs are masters at manipulating the students in their care and the communities that they operate in. They rub elbows with local authorities and have their influences on government officials. I could spend hours talking about the different abusive situations I witnessed at Agape. And how the staff at Agape would brag that they were allowed to do these things and get away with them because Missouri doesn't get involved. They take advantage of the separation of church & state that exists in Missouri. On another note, I also help with a podcast that has done 29 different interviews of ex-Agape students. And no matter if the ex-student was at Agape when they were in Washington or they just got out of Agape less than a year ago, they all speak to the same types of physical, mental and emotional abuse. Do I think that the government should dictate how a religious institution worships their God? No. But if any of these religious institutions are worried about the government getting involved to prevent child abuse in their

programs, that tells me they have something to hide. Missouri has failed it's children for decades, but now you have the power to make a positive change & protect future generations from living lives riddled with PTSD. I pray you make the right choice with this.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JAMES MATTHEW LAWSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: rn1124@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 4:40 PM
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Agape ruined my life and the life of other students. I was at Agape for 5 years and my name at Agape was seizure Boy because have epilepsy and Brian Clemenson called me seizure boy all the time. I was restrained and kicked to the ground everytime I had a seizure and Brian would grabbed me by the hair and told me to stop faking seizures but I was not faking seizures have lots of witnesses that tell me they will never forget me cause of all the torcher they saw me go through. They made me take my seizure meds without water which was hard. And made me sleep on top bunk and fell off multiple times busting my lip from seizures in my sleep. And my mom had to pay over \$100,000 on psychology for me cause counselors told her how Agape destroyed my brain. My mom spent over \$70,000 on Agape she cries hearing how they treated me and she hates that she was lied to on how I was doing. There is only one student who had a bigger health issue then me and brother Brian taped his head to a pole for over 8 hours lots of students remember that his name was scott thompson. In 01 I was raped at Agape and got punished like I was the guilty one when I shouldn't have been punished at all. Lots of former students and staff remember me cause of my mental disorder and they can't believe what Agape did to me that affected my health and made things worst. Please lots of lives have been ruined and more are happening as long as Brian Clemenson is around.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA SEITZ		PHONE NUMBER: 573-415-6228
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI KIDSFIRST		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 520 DIX ROAD, SUITE C		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021	
COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JOSHUA BRADNEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: joshuabradney5011@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 1:17 AM	

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Here is my statement my name is Joshua Bradney I went to agape boarding in august 2014- august 2016. My first day there I was approached by a staff named Julio he said if u respect me I respect u. That was the first thing he said to me. 3 days later I was getting a haircut standing on the wall in the room and he started yelling at us. He grabbed my shirt and ripped it and threw me to the ground cause I told him he spit on me. He spit on me again. He called another staff member named Jason Aaby and they physically dragged me out and put me in the padded room and a knee on my neck. And my arms behind me. As my time went down n I was personally picked in by staff named Julio samdovol Brent Jackson Leo lenze And more My time there was horrible and I was thrown down the stairs by Julio and got stitches from it. And another time by Brent Jackson. I was scared I wanted to kill myself. I was raped by the Older students and staff rewarded them and punished me. I have witnesses who will say I was. My trauma is very bad today so much went on at the school. I can't trust anyone and not even my best friend. I've lost everyone. When I was at the school staff made me do push-ups and told kids to beat me up. I am 19 years old today. And when I was there I was bisexual and in the closet and staff told students to beat me up until I'm straight. And if not staff name was Julio who did all this. This place is always on my mind and I cry about what happens there today. I want to help kids there and do everything I can to protect them. The staff there never cared for me and I have scars from them physically on my forehead. Thanks for all the help you guys are doing. Plz help us close the school or get the law changed. Also side note I am against agape boarding school hopefully I did this right



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: KELLY SCHULTZ		PHONE NUMBER: 573-522-8686
REPRESENTING: OFFICE OF CHILD ADVOCATE		TITLE:
ADDRESS: TRUMAN BUILDING, ROOM 680		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65202
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KEVIN GRIGORAS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kevin_grigoras@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 1:16 PM
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To whom it may concern, Hello my name is Kevin Grigoras, I'm 33 years old and am married with my oldest being 7. I spent 5 and a half years in the army and 25 months overseas. I willfully went to Agape boarding school from 03-05. I knew I was going there weeks before I arrived and I had ample time to look over all the material Agape provided at the time about their school. Honestly from reading it it sounded like a good place to spend a couple years. Oh how wrong was I. I realized the first day that that I arrived that this was not what my parents or myself signed up for or what was advertised. Personally my time at Agape I played it, smart work the system and learned from other people's mistakes and stayed out of direct trouble. I excelled fast through rank. For multiple reasons. Simply just the strictness of their no communication with other students unless staff was monitoring or else they considered it as trying to talk about running and that was grounds for "restraint" (physically torutre you into submission) was enough for me to gain the rank so I can could have as many staff priveliges as possible as a student like talking. This rule alone is taking away the basic human right of free speech that ragrdless of age we are born with. I was an observer I observed numerous students be beaten, punished and ridiculed for their sexual orientation. Ive seen kids beaten so badly, Julian Hoch, ewald(forget first mame), Justin Kruger, Michael tinkle, just to name the worst cases of abuse witnessed. Agape lies on their website and false advertises saying their school helps childeren with ADHD. This is false, kids with ADHD can only be helped by treatment and Medications. They are not real doctors therefore they can put lies on their website. They also say on their website that that they saw how bad juvinille detention centers were to kids so they wanted to provide something better this is a lie. I along with hundreds of other students have heard Brian Clemenson the new owner of Agape say that it was his goal to make this place worse than juvinile hall. Brian Clemenson is by far is the most evil person I have ever come across right next to Boyde Householder. He is the destroyer of childerens souls. Agape is also a slave work camp. They use child labor to futher their cause both on their own property and that of others. Ive witnessed Boyd Householder who is a old staff memeber of Agape and went on to open up and shut down Circle of Hope, use our labor bucking hey for farmers as a barter tool to acquire hay for Agapes many horses so they wouldnt have to pay that we also put labor into so they can sell them and make a profit. They used us to build their homes and Casltes. Lifting way to heavy and doing dangerous work around big rocks and carrying large trees in inclement weather. I learned what it meant to suffer while there and I stayed out of trouble. Just the simple fact that kids were being beaten for their sexual orientation should be enough to get this place shut down and people put in jail. ALSO the fact that the military can recruit from homes like this is nothing but students in duress signing to be in the military which in the military contract voids the military contract (yes a huge mess with millions of if not billiond of dallars in liability claims. They make it a positive thing like you get to leave campus with the recruiter and get away from Agape for a little. Thats an incentive as well. This is criminal not only of Agape but the military as well and they state needs to

protect children from throwing themselves at war from these schools. I went into the Army a year after Agape because I felt worthless after leaving that school and I wanted to see if I came out of the other end of war alive, worthy of my existence. Here I am and this is what I'm fighting for. Half because of how Agape treated me and half because my parents abandoned me there. To this day my Mom says she wished she never sent me there that it made me worse. That's what happens when your child spends 18 months in a work camp that makes the movie Holes seem like somewhat of a vacation in comparison. Schools of the type need to have a state official live in or be there on a regular basis or conduct monthly blanket surveys because if the school ever found out that a current student was going against them they would snuff out his soul when the state official left. I've seen kids deprived of proper food nourishment, I've seen kids spend days isolated by themselves looking at a wall and if they looked off a staff member would beat them. Ewald vs Brian Clemenson, Justin Kruger vs Brian Clemenson. I witnessed students come back from being beaten so bad that even touching the hair on their body caused excruciating pain (Julian Hoch). I've spent countless months sacrificing for this country and for this constitution so as to protect its inhabitants from treatment like this and if you guys don't do something drastic than I have taken lives and put my life in danger for you to drop the ball and not protect these innocent children from years of unspeakable damage. I have more scars from my 18 months at Agape than I do being Army recon in a warzone and again I had it easy compared to 90% of Agape with my final rank being a redshirt when I left. We will not stop fighting. The last thing you want is to not take action now because the next step is us finding the right organization to put this on headline media across the nation. I'm sure LGBT community would love to hear about homosexual boys being beaten to a pulp, isolated and treated like trash. PLEASE DO SOMETHING! Pardon my passion to save the innocent but we should be on the same page by now.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LATHROP LYBROOK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: lathrop425@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 11:17 PM
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In 1998 and 1999, I was sent from Georgia to CEDU Family of Services in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. I was kept there against my will for 15 and a half months. During that time, I was denied basic human rights while being subjected to psychological and physical abuse. That experience has stayed with me the last 20 years and made my life more difficult and painful to live than I ever could have imagined it would. The percentage of students who went to CEDU that have committed suicide and overdosed is tragically high, and that is exactly what staff told us our futures had in store during attack therapy sessions called raps. No one should ever have to go through what I and so many others have had to. I beg you to please vote in favor of protecting our country's youth. Human Rights should not start at 18. You can read more about my experience here: <https://lathroplybrook.com/whiteout>.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MACKENZIE MAE MILLAR		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Playitloudlike@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 7:34 AM
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My name is Mackenzie Millar and I attended Victory Christian Academy in Jay FI in the early 2000's. It was a lock down reform school. My parents placed me there after my inability to focus and complete school work. I was transported by a transportation agency at 2 am. I was woken up and dragged out of my bed by two complete strangers placed into a car and flown to the school. I was a huge Harry Potter fan and I could not grasp the gravity of what was happening so the 15 year old in me asked if it was like Hogwarts. The transporters replied yes. Little did I know it would be nothing like I could ever imagine. You see in Victory I was strip searched and placed on a buddy system. The buddy system is where they have a girl who's been there longer than you follow behind you directly behind you dictating everywhere you went. If you were deemed a major issue they would place one in front of you as well known as a "train". In Victory I was striped of basic human rights. I couldn't call my parents. They couldn't call me. I was forced to write home twice a week however all the letters ingoing and outgoing were read. If you said anything slightly negative they either made you rewrite it and gave you a demerit. I'll get to what a demerit is in a second or throw away the letter and never send it or mark out parts with a black Sharpe. Demerits are lines that we would have to write and turn in in a 24 hour period. We could get over 1,000 lines for the smallest infraction like talking or saying cool. We couldn't even say cool. We couldn't say the word pants because they were ungodly. At Victory religious freedom was not an option. You couldn't just opt out of singing a hymn or learning verses. Fundamentalist Baptist Religion was forced on every girl and if they did not comply they could be placed in what is called the get right room. The get right room was a closet, yes a closet that was its intended purpose when built. Girls were dragged into this isolation closet were they were watched by several other girls. They weren't allowed to eat normal meals like the rest of us so they were fed peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and water everyday. The room smelled like urine because you couldn't just go to the bathroom whenever. They would leave you in that room for hours, days and sometimes months. If you didn't comply with any part of the program they would threaten to start your time over. It was only supposed to be a year but I saw girls in Victory as young as twelve. I was stripped off all my depression medication at Victory the same day I arrived. I was taking meds for anxiety and depression that were prescribed by a psychiatrist. When I asked for my medication they said you don't need pills you need the Bible. I had the worst withdrawal in my entire life. I went from an overweight 240 pound kid to 115 by the time I left Victory. I threw up all day at Victory after the medication withdrawal and was given no medical treatment. I remember feeling like standing was a chore and they basically told me I was faking it and threatened to put soap in my mouth and floor me. Flooring is where they would have girls and staff place you down on the floor and sit on top of you. They would all dog pile you for minutes. They didn't take into consideration that you may have asthma or other issues they didn't care. It's a wonder no one else died at Victory. There was one death in California. Her name was Carrie Dunn. A Romana Ca newspaper still has an article on her that you may be able to find. We were forced to do manual labor at

Victory as children Carrie was chosen to help build the church. There was lumber set in a v form platform outside so you didn't have to drag the wood from the floor to the roof. She was standing under it when the wood collapsed on top of her killing her. I guess the investigators took Mike Palmer's word for what happened because she never got a thorough investigation. Girls who I've spoken to who were there when it happened were never questioned. To me Carrie's death was negligence and manslaughter. Children should never be forced to do construction work. We didn't even know how to do it. I think if there was some oversight back then Carrie would have never died. You see places like Victory use religious freedoms to what I call state hop. Mike Palmer originally started out in California but was forced to move because he wouldn't become licensed. He would hop state to state from New Mexico and eventually to Florida where I attended. Programs like Victory have no state oversight because they are exempt under religious freedoms and they use this to their advantage to abuse children. I was forced to eat my own vomit at victory. I witnessed girls dragged by their hair. I witnessed Palmer calling girls whores in chapel. I witnessed staff sitting on top of children. I witnessed food deprivation. I witnessed staff giving girls back the same tray of eggs for over a week stone cold. At Victory you were nothing more than a 2,000 dollar a month check in Mike Palmer's pocket. I was in Victory a total of a year and six months. When I left I had severe anxiety, night terrors and PTSD caused by Victory. Several girls who have left committed suicide. One of those girls was Michelle Ulriksen. She lit the torch for us in the beginning stages bringing awareness to what went on at victory. She wanted legislators and Senators to take action. She committed suicide after not being able to handle what happened to her at Victory anymore. I am pleading with you do not let her death be in vain. By passing this bill you are setting a precedent to other states by saying we will no longer allow the abuse of children under our watch. It's what Michelle fought for and so many others. Please seriously take a look at this bill. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Mackenzie Millar



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MAGGIE A DREW		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: magretdasquirrel@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 2:04 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Maggie Drew, and I was subjected to multiple varieties of abuse and neglect while in a tax exempt religious school in Missouri. I was molested by the founder, Boyd, I was robbed of my grandfather's inheritance to me for college as a minor and unknown to me until I found out when I told them I was leaving, I broke multiple bones, and needed medical treatment several times and was told to "tough it up and deal with it", (I have scars and bones still out of place, not to mention I'm fighting for help to get my back problems that they caused, fixed still), I was underfed and clothed in hand me downs that were held together by patch work the girls could manage and that didnt fit me, I wore the same skirt for 3 months without it being washed in 2007 because they had "nothing that would fit me" because I was tall, but they refused to get adequate uniforms, we only got clothes donated from people or churches, they had me as a 17 year old running med call with no medical training or licensing ever in my life, and told me it was fine because Stephanie was a registered nurse, I watched and was told to (not asked, we got threatened to be on the floor with them if we didnt make them cry loud enough) help with painful and violent restraints, I watched them lie to families and parents and churches while monitoring us like hawks and turning students against each other, I saw dhs come out a couple times, but I never got to speak with them. We were always told before dhs arrived as they had to get instructions to the property and that allowed boyd and stephanie to prep and scare us with horror stories and telling us that " the truth always comes to light" as a threat that if we told the state the truth they would make our lives hell if they found out, and thats only a small portion of what I saw and witnessed. We, as children in a place that was being paid by churches for their "honorable missions for christ" and by unknowing or uncaring parents/gaurdians for tuition, were heavily abused, and were told that the state couldn't step in, that they couldn't tell Circle of Hope how to punish us, or how to treat us, we were theirs and theirs alone, since our parents signed us in, they couldn't even pull us out without boyd and stephanie agreeing or suing them. They always tried to make the state out to be this terrible monster that wanted to rip us away from god and send us into the world unprepared and to fail, and it scared some of the girls for a long time. We were told that the police were on their side so going to them was like begging to be brought back, and girls tried, and were brought back and left with no help, after reaching out and telling the police, "they hurt us" and they didn't care. I'm a grown woman now, and a parent, and when I tell you that the state needs oversight on homes like Circle of Hope and Agape', I couldn't be more serious. Someone needs to hold them to a safety standard because the hell that I, for 5 whole years, and many others, some even longer, have been subjected to is absolutely unacceptable. There is no reasoning that anyone can give me that would justify the state not being to check up and say, "you need to buy your kids clothes that fit" or say "you should really be giving them the chance to do their schooling instead of having them do free hard labor to help you build appearances" or even a " We need to have a licensed therapist on site for these kids that isnt on your payroll" because any of those simple steps or even the presence of the state of Missouri being there

for us to go to at some point would have been a literal life saver, and we wouldn't have as many girls coming forward with rape and abuse stories from these places. There needs to be an accountability or something set in place to help the students, because that's what this is about, the students, not how many chapters of the bible we had to recite from memory and if we didnt we missed our meal, or how if you didnt work hard enough according to your piers you didnt eat that day. Both of those situations I witnessed multiple times while at Circle of Hope. They used the bible as a way to punish us, "dont work, dont eat" was a really frequent one, and if we had someone on site that could've stepped in, we wouldn't have women out here right now trying to fight the body dismorphia they got thanks to Boyd calling them pigs and Steph telling them they'll never amount to more than a prostitute when they leave because it wasnt on their own terms. These are all things that the state could have prevented from happening if they had been allowed some type of intervention above just the occassional dhs visit here or there that never helped us. WE as kids needed help, and we were ignored of a place that claimed a religion was what kept the state out of their business, they found a loop hole in the system to get away with abusing children, and enough is enough I say. We need to get rid of that loop hole, religion did more harm to me than good in that setting because it was a forced and brainwashed situation, had they not been allowed to abuse us using the bible, and christianity as a mask to hide, I wouldn't sit here right now telling you some of these awful things I witnessed and experienced from 2007 to 2013, and some of the even worse things happened after I left. Change isn't wanted in this regard, it's needed. From mental abuse to verbal to physical and sexual, we all suffered and still suffer due to the fact that the state had no say because we were in a religious organization and it was used to the fullest extent of their ability before they shut down. Circle of Hope finally shut down, for which I am grateful, but Agape' still stands, as does wings of faith academy on the same property, and to me, as a parent, that is unacceptable. If we need places to help teenagers they shouldn't be allowed to hide behind a religion and continue to abuse children. We can do better. Please help us do better for the next generations of kids. They don't need the physical problems I have, or the night terrors I get, or the loss of apetite and the inability to vocalize and communicate with people like I had to work through thanks to the trauma I got from a place that went unchecked for far too long. No one deserves to feel this turmoil and pain, especially not children, no matter how hard they are to handle.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021	
COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MARCIA HAZELHORST		PHONE NUMBER: 680-6463	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 1431 SOUTHWEST BOULEVARD, SUITE 7			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65201
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARIANNE MILLS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mare567@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 4:27 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As a parent of a former student at Masters Ranch this bill "needs" to become law. I witnessed first hand the neglect, mental and physical trauma my child experienced during his stay. Complaints fell on deaf ears- once that paper is signed and they have the money- these "boarding schools- wilderness programs- troubled youth camps" use intimidation and fear tactics to make you comply with their rules. There are "NO" licensed personnel at these facilities. The cult-like ranking system and atmosphere is intimidating and NOT evidence based practice. These children are left to fend for themselves with no oversight ... and these places " do what they want! Masters Ranch was shut down in Washington State for licensing and abuse - just moved the kids to The sister location in Missouri because the laws governing these places are lax. Hiding behind a 501 (c) (3) and or an agricultural exemption is one way these places get around being accountable and they also traffic the kids under the agricultural exemption. When I picked up my son he was 103 lbs 5'4"- underweight and malnourished. I support this bill to hold these people accountable and to keep the children safe !



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MARY CHANT		PHONE NUMBER: 5733036765	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI COALITION OF CHILDREN'S AGENCOES		TITLE: CEO	
ADDRESS: 213 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE, SUITE 101			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITU		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: mary@e-mcca.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 5:48 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MIRANDA SULLIVAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: miranda@talktroubled.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 7:51 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I would like to thank Rep Ingle for the earnest and efficient response to being enlightened to 30yrs of child abuse effectively shielded and condoned in the State of MO. Since the dawning of the US, we have had a predatory prevalence for kids in cages. Many of the MO programs are from the IFB / Lester Roloff tree which is also rooted in residential homes for the Indigenous. Currently on a f those programs, Agape, is accepting children through ICE (funded by our federal tax dollars) while simultaneously remaining exempt from any oversight or regulations. Many of my friends were brutally abused in MO. When we visited in Nov, the complicity of the local authorities was anything but covert. It is standard for programs to root in rural communities where integration is probable, employing locals and buying support. Agape employs local sheriffs and deputies, the same deputies which investigate the abuse allegations. Through our podcast, Troubled, we have connected with far too many who share similar experiences of abuse. As an ex altar girl, Catholic girl school from CT, I assure you that conversion therapy is torture and that "brutally sodomizing young boys" will not turn them straight. We have decades of such abuse among the spawn of (incl) Agape. We need you to pass this legislation so that we can hold these predators accountable and protect further children. MO is a trigger for thousands of Americans, but we hope that what happens here today will trigger a wave of justice that we can work on together.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NATALIE WILLS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: wills_natalie@berkeley.edu		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:35 AM

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I was sent to three programs after meeting my parents for therapy and being handcuffed by two large strangers who threatened me with their martial arts abilities. I was forced to sleep in a hotel with them and had no idea who they were or where they were taking me. I knew I was going to a camp for 5 weeks. That was extended and then I was referred to a lockdown facility after running away again in fear of continuous abuse. I also went to a stepdown RTC, which I was convinced I had to go to in order not to die. 2 years of my childhood between 2007 and 2009 had been stolen from me. I consider this false imprisonment, considering the amount of isolation, separation and estrangement that was forced upon me. Previous to being sent away, I smoked marijuana and would have gladly done whatever amount of jail time smoking marijuana would have given me (even though where I live now it's legal). I also cut class, and ran away from home AFTER parent's threatened to send me to one of these places. I was running from the abuse that I knew, through word of mouth, existed within this institutional structure. Its all shame/attack therapy based, teaching the kids that they would not move up in levels and get their basic human rights (ability to talk to parents, go outside, make eye contact with other kids) unless they participated in attack based therapy AND worked for the facility (a lot of gardening, every day). Speaking up would result in extremely isolative consequences. On multiple occasions I watched kids who were not a threat to themselves or others get restrained, hurt and placed in isolation. They got treated this way on random. I was forced to listen to stories of rape, molestation, suicides, an more, stories that these kids did not feel comfortable sharing in front of MANY total strangers, and strangers did not feel comfortable hearing. But if neither participated, human rights would be taken and punishments would include extreme isolation. I have PTSD from all the stories I was forced to listen to, in detail. Children are blamed and shamed for everything, except becoming a master of psychological attack therapy. There is no compassion and whether or not you would move up in levels really depending on how well you stroked the staff's ego. Nothing is evidence based here. My therapist did not communicate or coordinate with staff. My therapist encouraged me to break rules; rules that if broken would cause me to lose many rights and become restrained and isolated. My parents were charged hundreds of thousands of dollars and were manipulated and told that if I did not attend these programs I WOULD DIE. Today I have PTSD and nightmares that effect me every day.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021	
COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: NICHOLE M. NORTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RA'BIA GRIFFITH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: rabiavy@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 8:05 PM
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I'm a survivor of the Troubled Teen Industry and I support this legislative change in Missouri



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COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ROBERT LEPIDO		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: robertlepido@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 2:44 PM
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I Robert Lepido attended AGAPE Boarding School and received physical and mental abuse from the staff . Also seen sexual abuse . Most this abuse was from brother Burton , mainly brother bryn Clemson and was supervised by Jim Clemenson . If you want to request details please text or email me . 561-635-7607 robertlepido@yahoo.com Thanks Robert Lepido



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021	
COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHAWNNA ROSE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: roseshawwna824@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 7:14 PM
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I am writing a statement in support of my mother who went there in person to speak, Barb Patterson. She was a Rebecca girl in the late 70s. I have heard many horror stories from her on the types of abuse those girls endured. It has deeply affected her life and trickled down to mine and my siblings lives. Knowing the abuse continues still to this day is just unimaginable! No child deserves to wonder why they are being beat or not eating. Why they can't talk to family or to have their own babies ripped from their arms! Something has to change! There needs to be either some kind of monitoring system put in place or just a different alternative all together. These girls (and boys) are sent to these places for being "bad". Treating them with corporal punishment isn't going to help. It is proven children do not learn from that! Abuse only teaches abuse! I truly hope things will be changed.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHELLY SNOW PORDEA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: shelly.pordea@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 4:28 PM
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I have not been institutionalized in a troubled teen home, but am a survivor of the IFB cult. This is the movement that spawned homes like Circle of Hope and Agape in Stockton, MO. Sending us away to places like these was always a looming threat in our home and the abusive tactics and teaching of the IFB make it incomprehensible that facilities can use religious exemption to be unmonitored even today. As a Missouri native and current resident, I support any regulation that will protect children and abolish "religious" practices that have done damage to so many. Please vote to protect our children.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHELVA THOMAS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM	
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TRAGAN CAM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: tragan@tragan.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 10:39 AM
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My name is Tragan Campbell and I went to Agape Boarding School from February 1997 until the summer of 1998. I was 15 years old when I was sent there and I am 39 years old now, there hasn't been a day in my life since I left that I haven't thought about that place and how terrible it was. Lead by Bryan Clemenson, the school's Director and Dean, and Frank Burton, the Co-Pastor and Principal, staff and students alike meted out systematic physical and emotional trauma and abuse. Agape got kicked out of Othello, Washington because of their abusive practices towards children. Then they moved to Creston, California where they operated for a period of time before leaving for Missouri because of California's substantive child protection and safety laws. They have operated in Missouri since 1996 and there they found a place where they could exist in a virtual blackhole without anybody to hold them to account. Current Missouri law which explicitly prohibits any oversight of religious schools such as Agape created a race to the bottom where only the worst of the worst come because no other self-respecting state will have them. My first day there after being stripped down to my underwear and searched in the office by Brother Bryan and Brother Burton I was introduced to my so-called buddy, Eric. Having a buddy to show you the ropes and introduce you to other students sounds like a nice thing, and it would be, but that isn't what having a "buddy" meant. This kid was my boss. I was given a yellow shirt to signify that I was on "new-kid status" and I had to do everything he told me to do, right or wrong. I was required to stay no more than three feet away from him at all times. He had the authority to give me pushups for any reason at any time whether or not I had done something "wrong." Pushups were done in sets of twenty-five with a straight back and elbows flush against my sides. My nose had to touch the ground and if Eric deemed that I didn't do them correctly, he wouldn't count those pushups. Very quickly a set of twenty-five turned into a set of fifty without a break and when three or four sets were doled out at a time they quickly added up. Not being much of a sports person, I ended up doing hundreds of pushups a day. Eric would constantly get angry at me and yell inches from my face. He would repeatedly jab me in the sternum with two fingers hard while threatening me. This behavior wasn't aberrant it was expected and encouraged by the staff. Starting with Brother Bryan and Brother Burton on down, it was the culture they inculcated. It was exactly because of Eric's hot temper and aggressiveness that they made him my buddy. After leaving the office with Eric we went to the dining hall. In the dedication page of my Agape-issued Bible I wrote that it was given to me on the "worst day of my life." For that I earned a red wristband which I immediately found out meant that I was on no-talking status. That meant I couldn't talk to anybody at all except for my buddy or a staff member in the form of asking a direct, necessary question. If I got caught breaking that rule, or was even accused of it, by staff or my buddy there would be consequences. Later that day I wrote a letter home to my parents, I referred to Agape as a "hellhole" and I recall making some remark about wishing I was dead. For dinner that night, everybody was excited because the kitchen was serving Frito-pie. Apparently, it was considered a rare favorite amongst the students. I didn't want to eat and so I didn't,

despite my buddy telling me that I had to, I refused. The next morning at breakfast I was hungry and following my buddy I walked towards the kitchen. Brother Bryan stopped me en route and started screaming at me at the top of his lungs in front of the entire school assembled in the dining hall. I don't remember all of what he said but I do remember the bit where he said, "You don't get to choose when you eat, I tell you when you can eat." And so, on my second day Bryan Clemenson wouldn't let me eat. He wouldn't let me eat lunch and I don't recall whether I ate dinner that night. Later that afternoon, some member of the staff had read the letter that I wrote the day before. Brother Bryan again called me out in front of all the students in the dining hall. I don't recall precisely what he said but he was enraged that I had the temerity to write such a letter and he was especially incensed that I referred to the school as a hellhole. Along with all his screaming rage he made a show of ripping up the letter in front of everybody. That is how I learned that all outgoing mail was monitored by staff before it was sent out. If they didn't like what you wrote, bad things would happen. He purported to take literally what any reasonable person would have understood was simply an expression from the mouth of a teenage boy when I said "I'd rather be dead." For that, in addition to new-kid status and no-talking status, I earned suicide status and runner status. My personal shoes were taken away and I was given a worn down, used pair with the laces taken out. They were so large I couldn't walk in them so much as shuffle. Most of my clothes were taken away except for my yellow shirt, boxers, and socks. I was then given a shower robe to wear. I wore this robe at all times except when I was in bed at night. Being on suicide status also meant that I could not shower privately. During the entire duration of my time wearing that robe, I had to shower with the curtain open while my adult, staff dorm leader, Don Stagemyer, watched me shower a few feet away. The robe was my new uniform for the coming weeks. The rationale behind the robe and the oversized shoes without shoelaces was twofold. First, it made it very difficult to run away. If you were to try, you'd quickly become barefoot and even if you made it some distance you'd soon be spotted and brought back to the school. The second reason was plain and simple humiliation. You were in a bathrobe and boxers for everybody to see and creepy adult men watched you naked while you showered. During my entire time there was only one boy managed to run away. A few others appeared to have tried but they all were apprehended by other boys. It was the sheer humiliation and debasement that Brother Bryan and Agape were after with the robe and suicide status. In addition to the robe, I was also put on the wall. Being on the wall meant standing straight up with my face against the wall of the dining hall with my hands behind my back. I was given a piece of paper and instructed to hold it against the wall with my nose. If the paper dropped, I was given pushups and the threat of more wall time always hung over my head. Anytime I wasn't in chapel or church, in the dorm at night, or in my cubicle during school hours I had to stand on the wall. It was almost complete sensory deprivation. I didn't have it as bad on the wall as others did. I recall Brother Bryan only had me on it for two or three days. But other kids had it really bad. One boy in particular, who I believe was 12 at the time, was on the wall and in a robe for months. Sometimes they gave him a piece of paper to hold up, sometimes a rock the size of a fist. He had it really bad. My third or fourth day there, or thereabouts, during breakfast or lunch I was either walking to the kitchen to get food or to put my dirty plate away when Brother Burton stopped me and got in my face. He was flushed bright red and started yelling at me like the bulldog-looking former boxer that he was. If memory serves, he too was upset about the letter that I wrote. I don't remember everything he said but a few highlights still stand out. He said something like "you think you're special don't you," I managed to get out that I thought "everybody was special." Then he railed against me, "you're not special..." he kept repeating that and rattled off a series of demeaning insults. He went on to say that my problem was that I "was thinking." He repeated that several times in different forms, "don't think," "your problem is that you think," and "stop thinking." I don't recall whether I responded to that, but I know exactly what was going on in my head at the time. I was confused and wondering what kind of place I was at where I was told I was stupid for thinking – and this place called itself a school after all. He was down in my face eye to eye screaming at me, again, in front of the entire student body in the dining hall, when he dared me to punch him in the face. He kept taunting me, repeating that he wanted me to punch him in the face. He said that as soon as I did then he would be able to do anything to me he wanted. I didn't, I stood there locked in place wet with his spit, confused, not knowing what to do or make of the situation. Brother Burton is a strange character. He is a former college boxer who has serious anger issues. He would frequently tell stories about his lifelong history of becoming so enraged that he would black out and have no idea what he did or how long he was out. A favorite go-to story of his was his time as a young adult, maybe during his college years, where he worked on a golf course. He was such a hard worker that his coworkers would get mad at him for working too hard. And that was the moral of the story, work so hard that you make everybody else look bad, and if they get mad at you then you're doing it right. I think this was supposed to be motivation for us to all work harder during our compulsory morning work crews six days a week. But the truth is no matter how hard you worked it was never hard enough. And that's more or less how it went for me for my first six months there. I got my clothes back after three or four weeks but stayed on no talking. Eric was my tyrannical buddy for the next three months or so until they

gave me a different buddy. I remained on no-talking for several months. I was taken off briefly only to be put back on again because of another letter that I wrote. At that point I knew that outgoing and incoming mail was screened and censored, but I made what I thought was an innocuous comment about my new buddy and was put back on no-talking. By the time I got off no-talking and off new-kid status it was maybe three months later. Usually boys were taken off new-kid status within the first month or two, sometimes three. I had been on new-kid status for close to six months and had been prohibited from talking for the majority of that time. When I could finally talk again my throat hurt because I hadn't talked in so long. These people do not build up boys and make them men. Rather, they tear them down, ridicule them, insult them, threaten them, make them feel like they're nothing and then they leave them there. Sometimes they are physically beaten. Not just with swats but beaten, pummeled by staff and students. I witnessed one such occasion when Brother Bryan called a boy out. Brother Bryan had that look of rage on his face he got when he was about to lose it, he gathered together a group of other boys, five maybe six, he might have asked for a show of hands for volunteers. Then, Brother Bryan, the boy, and the group left the dining hall, shut the door, and nobody else was allowed to leave. They were gone for several minutes and when they came back, the boy had clearly been beaten. He was bruised, had a black eye, walked very slowly, and was sporting a red wristband on his wrist. He remained on no-talking for several months. That boy got in trouble because he named a horse. It was during my time at Agape that they first started acquiring horses and there was a naming contest for one of the first ones to arrive. Boys submitted names and Kathy Clemenson (aka Ma'am) selected the name she liked the most. This boy submitted the name Usher and Ma'am selected him as the winner. After some time, Brother Bryan learned that there was a double meaning to the name Usher, the first being a reference to a church usher, but the second meaning was thought to be a reference to the singer Usher. A core tenant of Agape's faith is that any music not sung about and explicitly to God is music that is sung to Satan and ipso facto it is another form of devil worship. And so, for that reason, this boy was beaten by Brother Bryan and a group of kids at Brother Bryan's direction. To this day I have reoccurring night terrors about that place. I am suddenly back there, and it's very real. Brother Burton and Bro Bryan are there. I am scared, afraid, and alone. The scenarios change but I am always isolated and cutoff from everything I know, and then I wake up and for a few terrifying seconds I am convinced I am back at Agape. After a moment I come to my senses and realize with great relief that it was just a dream. For a while after I first arrived at Agape, I would dream that I was asleep in my room at home only to wake up into a nightmare, now it is the reverse. When I came back, I was a very different person, I had been changed. The real world seemed strange and foreign. After turning inward for so long to get through that place I found it incredibly difficult to connect with my peers and readjust to normal life. At a very young age I had been through roughly a year and a half of pretty extreme circumstances and events, and I've only touched on a small handful of them here. What I experienced there are things that nobody else can understand unless they went through it themselves. Agape changed me forever and like a really bad scar it might heal but it will always be there. What they do at Agape is not just wrong it's illegal even by current laws. I'm not a legal expert, but adults beating up kids can't be legal. The problem is that the current system lacks any kind of oversight or accountability so existing child protection laws at the state and federal level cannot be enforced. An umbrella doesn't do a lot of good in a rainstorm if it can't be opened, and we have a similar scenario here. If a license is required to cut somebody's hair how is it okay to not require a license to take care of children? From what I understand Agape recently put out a statement in an attempt to defend themselves against recent media coverage of them that is less than flattering. Reading it is to understand more clearly the kind of double speak and half-truths they wield with abandon. Agape complains that the media outlets in question never contacted them, current students, or parents regarding the story. But, of course, it makes sense that they wouldn't. It would be a little bit like interviewing Jim Jones and the residents of Jonestown in 1978. They are under Agape's spell and don't even know it. They drank the Kool-Aid. Parents are often desperate to believe they made the right decision by sending their kids away. Over the course of a few months, they get a kid who seems totally different than the one they knew at home. The problem is that for the most part it's like a getting cheap paint job on a car, it's just a veneer that doesn't last long and soon chips away leaving you worse off than before. Absent parental consent, and Agape's de-facto consent, I don't think any currently enrolled student under the age of 18 make contact with the press. Assuming that all the proper permissions were given, the students who would be available would be students who, due to no fault of their own, would just spew out the same mumbo jumbo lines that I was taught years ago. Something about it being the will of God that they're at Agape, how Agape saved them from a life of hopeless destitution, how great the staff are at teaching them to be real men, and the list goes on. With respect to speaking to Agape's staff, well, the staff are a slippery bunch. I'm not sure what it would have accomplished to speak to any of them at this point. They would of course deny everything, invoke the veil of religious liberty and the end result would be a false-equivalency story of on the one hand, on the other which would have the effect of casting doubt on people like me who finally are able to talk about

what happened there and be taken seriously. The reporting I have come across is based on the firsthand accounts of people who were at that place and they went on the record to discuss what they experienced, what they saw, and the truth about Agape. That is the definition of substantiated journalism. The discerning parent would have the sense to see through their smoke screen and keep their kid as far away from that hellhole as possible. I was a student there, I know what that place is, Agape doesn't get to write me off as a former disgruntled student who should be disbelieved. Nobody is out to "hurt" Agape what would be the motivation for that? I am out to expose Agape for what they really are. The abuser doesn't get to play the victim because the people they abused are finally telling the truth and they don't want to hear it. I left that place a long time ago and they don't get to tell me what to do anymore. These people are not the good guys, their motives are no more pure than that of the extremist Madrassas in other parts of the world that foster hate and terrorism in the name of God. They turn boys into little monsters, angry and afraid. They're always ready to strike out against their fellow students and they live in terror of earning the ire of staff above them. This isn't a church and state issue, it's a basic humanitarian issue, it's a children's safety issue. Agape can try to dress it up however they want, whatever their religious views may be, they do not have the right to operate a house of abuse and give children physical and emotional scars that will last the rest of their lives. Child abuse is not Christianity and it's not religion. Agape and places like it should be closed forever. But, barring that, state licensure, basic oversight, and giving students the ability to contact outside, adult authorities is the minimum that this body can do if it is operating with any sense of conscience. Thank you for listening to my story, a long ago Agape told me that I couldn't talk and now I can finally speak.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021	
COMMITTEE: Children and Families			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA CLIDENCE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: my_amanda_fay@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 11:08 AM	
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As a former resident of Agape Boarding School, a school acting without oversight of the state of Missouri, I'd like to give my testimony. I witnessed numerous fire code violations, food safety violations, animal abuse, child abuse and neglect, prejudiced grading in the school, and labor violations. I'd often see through the windows that five men were in charge of watching over 100 students. I saw the padded room where students would be brought for isolation, and some staff would beat the student or have the 18 year old with him beat the student without reporting it. I witnessed numerous forms of hate speech and prejudice. I witnessed the owner give out creepy hugs to 12 year olds while treating older students like they had the plague, that they were horrible human beings who no wonder their parents didn't love them. An attorney once told me that I was a victim of human trafficking at Agape, because for the entire 2+ years I was there, they prohibited me from working or even volunteering outside of the home, instead forcing me to "volunteer" for them. I denied their requests three times and then was told that my husband would be fired, we would be evicted from our home, and rendered homeless if I did not comply with their wishes and show up where they told me to serve. Single staff women were grossly underpaid and not given benefits or overtime pay. Once married, they were conveniently denied their paychecks, told only that their husband would now support them while they would continue to be expected/required/mandated to volunteer for free for Agape. In fact, one woman was unfairly let go after she married and became pregnant. They told her it was so she could take care of herself and the baby, but shortly after the baby was born, she was told to come back to work and then denied her previously existing paychecks she had before she got married. Staff men were compensated for their wives working, given a check for around \$132.xx per month, in the husband's name, that was secretly understood to be the wife's chore money or, as the owner called it, "hat money." This was the same amount for every staff man, no matter if his wife worked 20 hours or 120+ hours per month, but this money would disappear for no explainable reason if the owner was at all displeased with the family, and sometimes women would be required to work, brainwashed into doing "the Lord's work," and they'd go for a year without their husband's receiving his stipend. I had a college degree and was expressly forbidden multiple times by the owner to not volunteer or work for anyone besides Agape, save for the annual Walnut Festival in town where they would send "volunteers" to help work the booths and clean up the trash, using minors and staff wives alike, and receiving compensation for these volunteers. I was told the week after I worked the ice cream booth that the man who owned it paid Agape for sending "volunteers" to him. But that was the only time I was ever allowed to go off campus and volunteer/work for another. In fact, and I know this is long, but once I went to the owner and said we had bills to pay and I needed/wanted to get a job off campus at maybe the local Subway or something, but I was absolutely forbidden. I told the owner that I was a servant, that I grew up in a good Christian home, that all I ever was was loyal and obedient to my authorities, that I didn't care what others around me thought because I served my leaders and wanted with all of

my being to make her happy, but that it wasn't right (or legal) for them to force me to volunteer for them when I needed the income of an actual job. With steel in her eyes, the owner told me to "tell my husband that God spoke to me and told me that it was His will that we leave Agape and go somewhere else" and to not stop until he agreed. Then she proceeded to tell me "you will never be happy here. You need to leave. When you work outside the home, you'll be tempted to see that the grass is greener on other side and then you will leave your husband." I was flabbergasted, and she coldly dismissed me, but not from my "volunteer" duties that she forced upon me without my or my husband's consent. There exists a complete lack of knowledgeable, properly licensed medical care professionals in charge of the wellbeing of more than a hundred students. My husband once collapsed at work, and they refused to send him to the hospital or even notify me of his incoherent condition. His twin, also employed at Agape at the time, called me hours later to tell me that they told him not to call me but he was disobeying them because he felt it was important for me to know that my husband had a medical emergency hours earlier and still hadn't come to consciousness. When I rushed to my husband's side in their joke of a medical care room, I found him being neglected on a cot, unable to make coherent sentences or even hold his hand up to take water. I stayed with him until he was able to stagger up and stumble out of the room, and to my recollection they demanded he return to work instead of going to get checked out by a licensed professional or taking the rest of the day off. That's not the only time he collapsed at work due to allergies to medicine or his hypoglycemia rendering him immobile, but never did they administer proper medical care to him or send him to Urgent Care or a hospital. If that's how they treat their adult staff, I can't imagine what they do to their students, minors whose medical conditions are often ignored once they get to Agape, and those with mental illnesses are (I've been told by former students) not given access to their medications to treat it. There is also a lack of accountability for employees who commit wrongdoings on campus. My husband was brought to the side and told to refill out reports because how he'd originally wrote them made Agape or its staff look wrong because of course they didn't want to be sued in the future. I firmly believe there is a lack of background checks, because two staff men were hired who Agape knew to be accused of gross, inappropriate acts with minors. Perhaps they order background checks, but I don't know why they allow violent, unhinged staff working there. The man put in charge of the sleeping boys during night shift for five years violated his sister for seven years through sexual molestation. Another man was brought from the nearby affiliated girls' home, Circle of Hope, because he was accused by multiple girls of offering contraband such as cigarettes and alcohol in exchange for sexual favors. Agape has a view that women hold the responsibility if men look at them and sin or violate their person through sexual harassment, molestation, or rape, and that their staff who were accused in the past were in a better place now working in a boys' home where they were away from temptation. One single staff lady, a daughter of an employee who was grossly underpaid, talked with me about wanting a restraining order to keep one former military staff member away from her because he was violent and would not take a hint and leave her alone. Even made aware of situations, Agape did nothing. The principal of the staff kids' school was moved into a different role at Agape when it came out that his daughter was being permanently removed by the state for child abuse and molestation. She plans to sue when she turns 18. He was kept on staff even after he and his wife lost custody rights of their daughter, and it was made known around campus that they were at fault for taking their daughter to an actual medical professional who uncovered the abuse rather than keeping her within Agape's umbrella of protection and its own medical care team. I cleaned the nursery regularly there, one of my assigned, unpaid roles, and parents were encouraged not to send their kids to church nursery if their kids wore suspicious bruises (from spankings and/or child abuse). As staff, we were constantly being monitored. We had to bring back a bulletin reporting where we attended church on our vacation or face termination. Some staff reported being called into the office for private conversations they had with their spouse in the privacy of their own homes, but it was forbidden of us to turn off the intercom phone system in our homes where they admitted to having used them to eavesdrop in the past but "don't do that anymore." Right. Further, all staff, their spouses, and their children over the age of 18 were required to sign an Anti-Defamation Contract or face termination. I know of many former staff who to this day are frightened of coming forward with their stories of abuse witnessed at Agape because they did in fact sign the contract. My attorney advised me not to sign, that it wasn't legal for them to coerce us to sign under duress. I was threatened with having my husband terminated if I did not sign and if I did not "volunteer" for Agape, and shortly after I refused to sign and pulled out of my "volunteer" obligations, my husband was in fact terminated, though he was assured it was not over his work ethic, and that he was one of the best teachers they had for the students, and the only teacher who understood the upper level math. (He'd come back from vacation once, gone more than a week, to find that students did not get even a problem done in their math or advance a single page because none of the teachers were capable of helping them.) Two years after we left Agape and our subsequent homelessness following his being told to not return to work, I made a comment on Agape's social media page where it was asking for donations to fix a train and one of their ovens. I mentioned they were charging over \$3,250

plus for tuition per each student, that their staff were barely able to scrape by (they boasted to us that they paid us so little so we would qualify for food stamps and government assistance healthcare), that they had over 100 students and that equaled out to more than \$3,000,000 per year that they could use to fix the little train and the oven themselves. I did not include that the owner was so careless with finances that they acquired new animals on a regular basis for the ranch (which most boys barely got to see or help with), or that she once offered to buy a tanning booth that only the staff women were allowed to use but couldn't find enough ladies who'd use it, or that the owners had multiple vacation homes in Branson. Certainly they could afford the less than \$5k needed for their oven and play trainset that was only used during holidays. Parents have reported to my husband and I that they were promised things by Agape that they never saw come to fruition regarding their sons' care. Some parents have shared that their sons have been scarred by the experience, one going so far to say that her son was sexually abused on campus, reported it, and then disciplined for reporting it. I myself called the sheriff's office on two separate occasions regarding abuse I witnessed at Agape, but not once did I ever have a witness statement recorded or even a call back. One former student states that after he ran away, he was brought into the sheriff's office to give a testimony because he'd alleged abuse by Agape, but that Agape had a staff member sit in on the interrogation, and the boy was too scared to give an honest statement with one of his abusers in the room with him. Now I know that this bill states "it is not permitted to regulate any religious program, curriculum, or ministry," but that's an intentional, willful oversight that is allowing minors to be abused, malnourished, and physically, mentally, and emotionally scarred for life. The fear of retaliation from right-wing religious groups should not be worth more to you than the safety of students in these child residential homes. All statements above are true based on my own eyewitness accounts or the eyewitness accounts of others told to me.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 560		DATE: 2/10/2021
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: CAITLIN WHALEY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-751-4815
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 221 W. HIGH STREET		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 12:00 AM
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CYNTHIA SCHOTT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: schott07@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 6:05 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: GABRIEL JOSEPH GONZALEZ		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: gbartender@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 11:40 AM
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Dear honorable members of Missouri, My name is Gabriel Gonzalez and I am writing to testify on the need for legislation solutions in religious residential programs in Missouri's troubled teen industry. First, I want to point out and remind this body that these proceedings are a response to a mounting of abuse allegations from two religious residential Troubled Teen (treatment) facilities. It is important to consider these religious programs did not properly cooperate with the state in reporting abuses and is impart why we are here today. and I also asked to consider amendments to any bill put forth that allow religious freedoms to opt-out of basic comprehensive legislation in protecting young people in care. To further explain why this body must take immediate legislation solutions; I would like to share a bit of my personal experience which is from a troubled teen facility called Freedom Village USA (FV) of Lakemont, NY. As a program teen participate, I received not only poor education, but experienced forced labor conditions, and controversial punishments. I was also constantly being monitored from my communication to my family through phone calls and writing. the program restricted basic things sucks as books to read, and provided no source of news or tv from the outside world. There were times where basic things like heat weren't provided during cold winters. The program also used extremist views and if I did not comply or question them, I was punished. These punishments consisted of isolation tactics, mind-numbing exercises of punishment such as hauling wood in a parking lot from one side to the other for hours, including public humiliation by the staff and the director. There were times I wanted to leave and I was trapped in a place where fear was used as a form of control. Also, all my communications were monitored by which preventing me to seek help. For three years of my life of a program that was supposed to be 12 months became a nightmare. Not only was my request to leave was dismissed by staff I was presented that I would fail in life outside of this program. . One practice they used was to promote students into staff positions who were not only qualified nor trained to work with this population that I belonged to. This not only enables abuses to occur but was again under-reported to the states of what can be argued as civil rights violations on young people. I have submitted through email to one of the offices of senator Viet a breakdown of Freedom Village to better understand those challenges faced by not only myself but other survivors. I also included documents to understand the severity of how a non-regulated program such as freedom village ran into problems such as court cases. These documents I ask to be attached with my statement. It is also important to note that Freedom Village was part of the same network as Agape and Circle of hope; both programs used the same resources including their education and behavior modification approaches as Freedom Village did. Freedom Village ran unregulated by claiming religious freedoms to not cooperate with the state and self-regulated. This permitted frauds, scammers, and child predators working with a population of vulnerable youth labeled as troubled teens. these young people ranged from situations such as drug addictions, struggles with mental health, dysfunctional families, and more. Moreover, it is important to be aware of the therapeutic claims and behavior modification approaches being made by

the mentioned programs. Whether they are registered or licensed as a therapeutic facility and how they distinguish themselves from other private schools to understand the impact on the populations they serve and to determine the legislation solution being sought out in this hearing. Freedom Village holds similar allegations as the two mentioned Missouri programs. These include sexual assault allegations of which the administration did not properly report nor provide proper training to its staff on how to report and handle abuses. To give a clearer example, a court case that was won against Freedom Village USA found the institution failing to report and conduct a background check of a staff member. That case listed the same staff member of sexually assaulting a young teen boy in his bedroom. Again, this a clear example of why cooperating with the state and why oversight and regulations are needed to provide basic safety. Not only did Freedom Village experience allegations of institutional abuse but has multiply court cases in court currently revolving around sexual assault and rape. These cases and allegations range from every decade of Freedom Villages' existence including my time I spent there. Again the administration was aware of many of these incidents and did not properly report and used religious freedoms to dodge the state in reporting. For example, When I attended Freedom village I witness a fellow program participant who reported a sexual assault incident who said he was raped. That incident never got reported to the proper authorities and was dismissed internally leading to expelling that student from the program the day he made that claim. This is an example of how an unregulated program operated to distance itself from a sexual assault allegation. And this incident is one of the court cases currently in court right now. Additional allegations examples at Freedom Village are as followed: A pregnant 15-year-old girl comes to Freedom Village USA. She never receives proper medical care. Not only is she shamed but is also punished. She ends up miscarrying during an inappropriate form of physical punishment (woodpile) and is sent home to distance the program from her. An older male staff member, named Tom Edelinski, allegedly had an inappropriate relationship with young girls which resulted in a teen getting pregnant. Staff Member Miguel Galan, a former program student promoted to a high-level staff position, was arrested for having inappropriate relations with a young male. and returned several times to the program for visits. A staff member, who was called Coach Rhodes, allegedly had an inappropriate relationship with a young girl which didn't get reported to the authorities. A staff member named Pastor Harris is currently in a court filing for accused of sexually assaulting a young teen boy multiple times. These are all examples of the challenges of institutional abuse with no oversight and with little to no regulations protection of a residential troubled Teen Facility. Freedom Village also did not comply with state law as a private school in NY. The educational curriculum was not in compliance with the state and provided its students with an inadequate education. These students including myself were not prepared properly and did not meet standards in proficiency as a high school graduate. This led to many of the former students' struggles in preparing for higher learning. When applying to higher learning, their diplomas were rejected from state universities. This resulted in students seeking a GED to salvage their education which includes me. I believe we can all agree that to provide poor inadequate education to young people is not only neglect but also abuse and I ask this body to also consider whether adequate education standards are provided in the said programs, whether it may be in a religious or secular format. Overall I hope by sharing some of my experience at Freedom Village USA you could help understand challenges faced by a troubled teen program that used religious freedoms to dodge basic common sense oversight protection. By not providing comprehensive oversight, it leaves open the opportunity for fraud, abuse, and child predators to prey on our young people as in the example and case of Freedom Village USA. Many of these allegations could have been prevented if there were proper checks in balances put in place. Furthermore, I ask this body to review the programs such as Agape and Circle of Hope associations and controversial practices/approaches on young people. This includes the network they belong to determine your solutions in protecting our young people. I understand it is a challenge to question the use of religious freedom abuse. I want to share with you that I am a person of faith and believe in religious freedoms as a Christian on how it is important in our society. In my faith, I attend a protestant church and share some of the same values many of whom are present at today's hearing. and I not only beg but employ you that we must protect our young people from harm's way even if it is masked under a religious ministry. It is furthermore our responsibility including those in faith to protect youth and children. These programs I mention including the network they belong to have not only a habitual history of refusing to cooperate with state agencies are also in my opinion detrimental to the protections the state of Missouri is committed to for youth and children in care. Today with the others who are testifying, you hear residential programs that are running with extreme cases of abuse that are habitually happening to young people attending troubled teen facilities in your state. These are extreme cases of abuse and allegations that are also considered civil rights violations against our young people who are vulnerable in care with little to no protection in place. It is also important to note, many religious programs do cooperate with the state to provide educational programs that meet educational standards including safety measures for its students. however to allow institutions, specifically residential programs unchecked with little to no oversight leaves the door open in where

abuses can occur. In closing, I trust this body will review these concerning issues and again thank you today for not only your participation and patience; but the work you have laid ahead in protecting the young people in the state of MO who currently in "unchecked" programs. Respectively, Gabriel Joseph González



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COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GINGER MCNULTY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gingermcchic@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 5:00 PM
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It is not legal for you or I (or ethical... or... why would you!) to take a kid from their bed in the middle of the night, in handcuffs and/or drugged if they won't go along, and then keep them incommunicado, deprived of sleep, medical care, to beat them, force them to work to exhaustion, and all of the rest of what makes up the troubled teen industry. So, it cannot be legal for a parent or state to hire people to do these things. If you are not aware that rampant and outrageous child abuse is going on in the "troubled teen" facilities in your state, then you need to be paying more attention. It is. I'm not familiar with the details of this bill, but if it looks like it will expose these child abusers, please support it. If it doesn't do that, write another one. But PLEASE quit aiding and abetting child abusers.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HANNAH KILFOYLE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: hwy89survival@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2021 10:33 PM
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My name is Hannah, I am a 27 year old business owner from California. When I was 13 years old I was picked up out of my bed in the middle of the night by strangers who threatened me with mechanical restraints if I resisted. I didnt know why or where I was going. My parents were instructed to ignore my pleas for help. And this would be the first of many times they were told I was manipulating them and telling lies. My parents had me sent to Lighthouse Christian Academy in Jay, Fl. To help me with my emotional and behavioral issues. My parents thought a good christian facility would be the right environment for me. Unfortunately, the facility was the one who sold my parents lies. With its nice staff and pretty property, my parents believed in this programs ability to help me. But all Lighthouse really had to "fix" me was abuse. There was no therapy. There was no medication. There was no mental health education. Lighthouse offered forced religion, a book of extremely controlling rules on top of psychological, spiritual and physical abuse. I was tackled, physically pinned and SAT ON by my own peers within the first week for not moving my legs fast enough during inside exercises. We were denied bathrooms to the point of pain and girls wetting themselves. Students were put in an isolation box for days and I witnessed girls in there for months. Because I had to watch and punish them too, per the programs structure. I had to "floor" them too. I had to watch girls bathe and use a toilet too. I was also forced to bathe and use a toilet in front of not just staff but many students. Communications were monitored heavily. I could not access a phone to contact my parents, authorities or a lawyer. This isnt as simple as prison, you see. We were children who had less rights than those who commit actual crimes. The leadership would mock us for trying to tell our parents the truth and tell our parents we were lying. They would sharpie out parts of our letters they didnt want our parents to see. And vice versa, on letters we received from them. They charged thousands per month per kid. They dragged kids across the field and put them in isolation if they couldnt run anymore. They forced students to sleep at desks in the classroom for weeks. They used physical restraints such as handcuffs. They would psychologically and spiritually tell us things like "maybe god is trying to tell you something since your dad died" insinuating our behavior/lack of spirituality caused bad things to happen. And then made things come true by mocking us. I was stood up and told I had the greatest chance of going to hell because I was a "scorner" or a "mocker" of Christ. For no apparent reason other than I didnt go to alter call enough. You wouldnt read all the examples I have of what this plaxe did to us if I listed them. I was there for almost 4 years. I suffer from complex post traumatic stress disorder, major depression, panic disorder and generalized anxiety disorder. Its taken a long time to be functional again and I still dont feel fully human. The people who ran my facility in Fla, ran another in Mexico. They have both since been shut down. And now they work in your state. At a program called Masters Ranch. We told the owner of Masters Ranch, and he doesnt seem to care about the physical and sexual abuse allegations shared with him. He had another facility in Washington shut down over documented abuse. And now also has a girls program in MO. And wants to do another. His kids (under 18) do heavy

manual labor (forklifts sawmills) without proper training or pay. And he makes thousands and thousands. Its no wonder he wants to open as many as possible considering the kids govern build and maintain these facilities. He and many of these programs hide under religious exemptions. They are wolves in sheeps clothing. They run undetected. They brainwash kids and parenting into thinking they would die without the programs interference and the kids then put up with any mistreatment. I know I did. Until we get older. And have families of our own and realize there is absolutely nothing a "bad" kid can do to deserve these treatments. Forced silence for months. Isolation. Bathroom denial. Censored communications. No state oversight. The list goes on. You MUST interfere. If not on behalf of the children, go get your tax money from them. Stop MO from being the safe haven of the Troubled Teen Industry.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KYRA FRANKOWSKI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: frankowskiky@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2021 8:51 AM
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I am a survivor of two “troubled teen,” “therapeutic” programs in Utah. I was struggling with my mental health as a 13 year old, to the point that my parents felt they had to resort to one of these programs. First I went to Second Nature Wilderness Therapy, and then Eva Carlston Academy (a NATSAP program). I was gone from January 4, 2014, to August 14, 2015. Those two years are a dense fog that I will never get back. At these programs I experienced and witnessed almost all kinds of abuse, in my opinion. We were psychologically attacked daily, and often forced to perform manual labor for the programs. I still have nightmares about my time there, and have lost friends from their internal battle with the haunting memories of those places. No child deserves this “treatment” - regardless of how “troubled” they may be. There needs to be more oversight so that kids don’t keep getting hurt.