

# Senate Judiciary Committee

*Jennifer Horgan 271-7875*

**HB 239-FN**, relative to prosecutions for certain assaults against minors.

**Hearing Date:** April 13, 2021

**Time Opened:** 1:39 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 1:45 p.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Carson, Gannon, French, Whitley and Kahn

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill changes the statute of limitations for the prosecution of first degree and second degree assault offenses.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Abramson

Rep. Ankarberg

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**Who supports the bill:** Rep. Abramson; Eric Pauer

**Who opposes the bill:** No one

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

**Representative Abramson**

- This bill extends the statute of limitations for an attack of someone under the age 18.
- Right now, if someone commits felony level assault, first or second degree, against a ten-year-old child the statute of limitations runs out when that child is 16.
- NH currently has statutes of limitations that do not start until a victim turns 18.
- The NH Supreme Court has given good reasoning for the need for statutes of limitations.
- The problem of having a statute of limitations start for victims that are very young at the time of the attack is that children do not understand how the statute works, who to report it to, how to tell someone, and often their attacker it is either a relative, teacher, or an authority figure.
- Often there is not a realistic opportunity for the victim to come forward because they may still live with their attacker.

- It makes sense, as with felony sexual assault, that the clock does not start on the statute of limitations until the victim turns 18 for first- and second-degree assault.
- This bill is meant to deter people from doing this by having a long statute of limitations.
- There are criminals who specifically target victims they know will have a hard time coming forward, like children.

**Summary of testimony presented in opposition:**

None

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 14, 2021