

**AMY'S LETTER SUPPORTING  
THE AMY AND VICKY CHILD PORNOGRAPHY VICTIM RESTITUTION  
IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014**

I am writing today to give my support to the Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Victim Restitution Improvement Act of 2014. It is very important that this law get passed as soon as possible.

The past eight years of my life have been filled with hope and horror. Life was pretty horrible when I realized that the pictures of my childhood sex abuse were on the Internet for anyone and everyone to see. Imagine the worst most humiliating moments of your life captured for everyone to see forever. Then imagine that as a child you didn't even really know what was happening to you and you didn't want it to happen but you couldn't stop it. You were abused, raped, and hurt and this is something that other people want. They enjoy it. They can't stop collecting it and asking for it and trading it with other people. And it's you. It's your life and your pain that they are enjoying. And it never stops and you are helpless to do anything ever to stop it. That's horror.

There was also hope. Hope in finding someone who could help me like my parents and my lawyer. And hope in meeting Joy, my psychologist, who was the first person who really understood what I was going through. Then I met Cindy, my therapist, who also really helped me with all the twists and turns with what I was feeling when I tried to make sense of my life and what had happened to me as a child and what is happening to me on the Internet. I felt lots of hope when my lawyer started collecting restitution to help me pay my bills and my therapist and for a car to drive to therapy and to just try to create some kind of 'normal' life. Things were getting better and better.

Then we started having problems with the restitution law. Judges sometimes gave me just \$100 and sometimes nothing at all. A few judges really got it, like when I was at the Fifth Circuit oral argument two years ago and the judges agreed that the child sex abuse images of me really do cause ongoing and long-term harm. The article by Emily Bazelon in the New York Times also really helped to tell my story

so that people can understand what it's like to live with child pornography every day of your life. I was really happy to discover recently that her article received honorable mention in a contest recognizing excellence in journalism.

After a long time and a lot of court hearings all over the country, my case was finally at the Supreme Court. I couldn't believe how long and how far my case and my story had gone until I was sitting there in the Supreme Court surrounded by so many of the people who have supported me and helped me during these years. To hear the justices discussing my case and my life was really overwhelming and gave me lots of hope not just for myself but for other victims like Vicky who I met for the first time right before the oral argument. I know there were other victims there too who are too afraid to speak out and too afraid to even think about what happened to them and what is happening to them online, on the Internet, because of their childhood sexual abuse and child pornography. I hoped that at last the very important people on the Supreme Court would decide that not just me, but all the victims like me—who were so young when all these horrible things happened to us—could get the restitution we need to try and live a life like everyone else.

All the justices were respectful and it was obvious that they had thought a lot about the issues. When the oral argument finished I was really hopeful that we would win the case. It felt good doing something this significant to make a difference in the world. It was a great feeling after so many years of just trying to get it right.

My hope turned to horror when the Court decided two weeks ago that restitution was “impossible” for victims like me and Vicky and so many others. I couldn't believe that something which is called mandatory restitution (twice) was so hard to figure out. It just seemed like something somewhere was missing. Why, if so many people are committing this serious crime, why are the victims of that crime, who are and were children after all, left out? The Court's decision was even worse than getting no restitution at all. It was sort of like getting negative restitution. It was a horrible day.

This is why I am so happy, and hopeful, that Congress can fix this problem once and for all. Maybe if they put mandatory in the law for a third time judges will get it that restitution really really really must be given to victims! After all this time and

all the hearings and appeals and the Supreme Court, I definitely agree that restitution needs improvement and hopefully this bill, the Amy and Vicky Child Pornography Restitution Improvement Act of 2014, can finally make restitution happen for all victims of this horrible crime.

Thank you for supporting this law and working so hard to give victims the hope and help they need to overcome the nightmares and memories that most others will never know. Thank you Senator Hatch and Senator Schumer for making my hope real!

Amy (no longer) Unknown  
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