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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR RAPE

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, two Stanford students were biking one night when they noticed a half naked woman lying motionless behind a dumpster with a male student on top of her. When they confronted the attacker, the man took off in the darkness of the night. The Good Samaritans were able to catch the coward and knock him to the ground. The woman, just 22 years of age at the time, was being raped, and the rapist was caught in the act.

When the victim regained consciousness, she was on a gurney, covered with pine needles, and was bleeding. Her assailant was Brock Turner, a scholarship swimmer at Stanford. Brock was found guilty of sexual assault on three counts. His sentence? A mere 6 months in prison and 3 years probation. Because the judge said "a prison sentence would have a severe impact on him." Well, isn't that the point?

Mr. Speaker, the punishment for rape should be longer than a semester in college. The defendant's dad called it a

"steep price to pay for 20 minutes of action." Clearly, Brock is a chip off the old block and daddy will never be named father of the year.

For many victims, Mr. Speaker, rape is a fate worse than death. Here is why. Because rape victims say that after being raped, they die emotionally many times; and with homicide, one dies only once.

After the sentencing, the brave victim read, Mr. Speaker, a 7,200-word statement to her attacker, the rapist. She said in part:

"I tried to push it out of my mind, but it was so heavy I didn't talk, I didn't eat, I didn't sleep, I didn't interact with anyone. I became isolated from the ones I loved the most. After I learned about the graphic details of my own sexual assault, the news article listed his swimming times, saying 'by the way, he's really good at swimming.'"

"I was the wounded antelope of the herd, completely alone and vulnerable, physically unable to fend for myself, and he chose me. During the investigation, I was pummeled with narrowed, pointed questions that dissected my personal life, love life, past life, family life, inane questions, accumulating trivial details to try and find an excuse for this guy who had me half naked before even bothering to ask for my name.

"My damage was internal, unseen, I carry it with me. You took away my worth, my privacy, my energy, my time, my safety, my intimacy, my confidence, my own voice.

"While you worry about your shattered reputation, I can't sleep alone at night without having a light on, like a 5-year-old, because I have nightmares of being touched where I cannot wake up. I did this thing where I waited until the sun came up and I felt safe enough to sleep."

Mr. Speaker, I was a prosecutor and a criminal court judge in Texas for

over 30 years. I met a lot of rape victims and learned how these attacks sometimes devastate their lives.

This judge got it wrong. There is an archaic philosophy in some courts "that sin ain't sin as long as good folk do it." In this case, the court and the defendant's father wanted a pass for the rapist because he was a big-shot swimmer. The judge should be removed.

The rapist should do more time for the dastardly deed that he did that night. This arrogant defendant has appealed the sentence. I hope the appeals court does grant the appeal and make it right and overturn the pathetic sentence and give him the punishment he deserves.

As a country, Mr. Speaker, we must change our mentality and make sure that people recognize sexual assault and rape for the horrible crimes that they are. As a grandfather of 11, I want to know that my granddaughters are growing up in a society that has zero tolerance for this criminal conduct. No means no. A woman who is unconscious does not even have the ability to consent or fight back.

Victims, like this remarkable woman, must know that society and the justice system are on their side. Too often the focus is on defending, protecting, and excusing sex offenders like Brock Turner. The entitlement mentality, being a good college athlete, and self-righteousness do not trump justice.

In 6 months, when Brock Turner is out of prison, he will return to his life, but the life of the victim may never be the same. The criminal has given her a life sentence of mental pain, anguish, and turmoil. Mr. Speaker, when rape occurs, the criminal is trying to steal the very soul of the victim.

Justice demands the judge be removed. The defendant should receive more time in prison. We, the people,

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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