



THE THINK TANK FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Remarks by Prof. Marci Hamilton on the Passage of the New York Child Victims Act
State Capitol, Albany, New York
Jan. 28, 2019

It is wonderful to be here on this historic day. Over 15 years ago, I made my first trip to Albany to discuss what would become the Child Victims Act with Assemblywoman Marge Markey. Every year since then, I returned, often more than once. Why? *Because it was the right thing to do.*

No press or other lawmakers attended our first press conference.

Justice was denied again and again despite the irrefutable logic of child sex abuse statutes of limitations reform. Politics should not be relevant to a bill that uncovers hidden child predators and shifts the cost of abuse from the victims to the ones who caused it. But it has been.

I hope the many other states and lawmakers witnessing New York's major reform today will note the ultimate cruelty of delaying access to justice for victims of child sex abuse. The shortsighted self-interest of the Catholic bishops, insurance lobbyists, and Agudath Israel are responsible for prolonging the victims' suffering for over 15 years. Shame on them.

Many have made this historic moment possible. First, the press. Without the public disclosure from relentless reporters and editorial board support the Child Victims Act would not have happened. Thank you New York Daily News and New York Times. Thank you Ken Lovett, Michael O'Keeffe, and Christian Red. Thank you Dorothy Samuels, Laurie Goodstein, and Jesse Wegman.

Second, the lawmakers. Many thanks to Governor Cuomo, who kept this issue alive when the Republican-controlled Senate would have none of it. And to Assemblywoman Marge Markey, our pioneer leader, Sen. Brad Hoylman, Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Speaker Carl Heastie, and Assemblywoman Linda Rosenthal.

Third, but MOST IMPORTANT: the survivors. I am genuinely sorry that this took so long. This was hard on you. But your years of stalwart perseverance are assisting right now in creating access to justice in other states and other countries. I promise you that I, and CHILD USA, will fight for SOL reform everywhere until the world has shifted the balance of power from the perpetrators and their institutional partners to the children.

Special thanks to Corey Feldman and Justin Conway, Kathryn Robb, Steve Jimenez, Sarah Powers Barnhard, Sarah Klein, Jessica Howard, Bob Hoatson, Rich Tollner, and so many others.

Let's savor this moment of victory!

