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Statement by Gloria Allred

Today I am here with my client, Lisa Gentile, who alleges that she was sexually abused by actor Chris Noth in 2002. Lisa is a singer and songwriter, and a resident of New York State. Even though it is difficult, she is breaking her silence today to share how she alleges that she was sexually victimized by Mr. Noth, because she believes that breaking her silence may help others who have been victimized by powerful men in their lives.

Because what Lisa alleges happened to her almost 20 years ago, under the law in New York State, it is too late for her to have access to justice in New York State. In New York, the statute of limitations, which is the arbitrary time period set by law for filing and litigating a lawsuit, has expired. In other words, it is too late for her to file a lawsuit and have a jury hear her testimony under oath against Chris Noth. The courthouse door is slammed shut in her face denying her an opportunity to seek to assert and vindicate her rights in a court of law because of the statute of limitations.

Lisa feels that it is time for the law to change and that is why she is speaking out today. She understands that many victims of sexual abuse do not come forward until years later for a variety of reasons. In some cases, they think that nobody will believe them or that they will be blamed for what happened to them. In other cases, they may be threatened or feel threatened or believe that they will be retaliated against by the powerful person who has victimized them.

The result is that adult survivors of adult sexual abuse in New York are denied access to justice because when they are finally courageous enough to come forward, they are barred by law from pursuing a lawsuit and having a judge and jury decide their case in a New York court of law.

It is long overdue for the law to change. In New York now, there is an important bill which has been introduced and which has been passed by the New York State Senate called the Adult Survivors Act (ASA).

This bill would create a one-year lookback window for adult survivors of adult sexual abuse to hold those who have sexually victimized them accountable. Victims would be able to file lawsuits even if it would otherwise be too late under existing law for them to seek justice. This bill would be similar to the law which was passed in New York which provided a one-year lookback window for adult victims of child sexual abuse.

This week, three stars of “Sex and the City” spoke out in support of the women who have made allegations against Chris Noth. Sarah Jessica Parker, Cynthia Nixon and Kristen Davis said in a statement, "We are deeply saddened to hear the allegations against Chris Noth. We support the women who have come forward and shared their painful experiences. We know it must be a very difficult thing to do and we commend them for it."

Lisa and I appreciate their words of support for the previous accusers of Chris Noth, and now we urge Sarah, Cynthia and Kristen to take action to speak out in support of the Adult Survivors Act, as Lisa and I are doing today. Their endorsement of this act will be important to its passage when the New York Legislature begins its session next month.

We also call on the first woman Governor of New York, Kathy Hochul, to include the passage of the ASA in her State of the State address in the Assembly Chamber when she delivers her remarks in less than two weeks on January 5, 2022. At that time, she will explain her policy agenda for New York, and Lisa and I respectfully urge her to include the Adult Survivors Act as an important part of her policy agenda for her administration, so that those who allege that they are victims of sexual predators are afforded their day in court, rather than being denied it by the statute of limitations.

We urge Sarah Jessica Parker, Cynthia Nixon, Kristen Davis, and millions of victims and those who care about victims’ rights to join us in contacting Governor Hochul to urge her to include the ASA in her policy agenda in her speech on January 5th.

We also urge the stars of “Sex and the City” to state that they would be willing to testify in support of this bill if the New York State Assembly holds a hearing and allows testimony. Lisa and I would also agree to testify if the Assembly permits our testimony.

Finally, we also urge Chris Noth to speak out in support of the New York Adult Survivors Act. He has asserted in a statement that everything he did with those who have accused him was consensual. If that is true, then he should support the ASA so that the accusers’ allegations can be resolved in a court of law rather than in the court of public opinion.

I am honored to support Lisa Gentile in her courageous effort to advocate for change for those who have been victimized. We urge all those who are victims and those who care about victims to join us in our campaign to change the law.

All we want for Christmas is access to justice and the passage of the Adult Survivors Act next year. If and when it becomes law, those who were victimized in New York will have the right and opportunity to finally hold those who have victimized them accountable in a court of law.

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