ECLEG NOV05'12 PM 1:49

Domestic Violence as a Human Rights Violation

The Women, Children and Social Justice Clinic at SUNY Buffalo Law School

We Need Your Support

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Freedom from domestic violence is a fundamental human right. Local Governments have a responsibility to secure and enforce this right for the safety of their citizens.

HHS

We are asking for your support in requesting the Erie County Legislature to adopt a resolution declaring that domestic violence is a violation of human rights. We would like to join Cincinnati School of Law, Columbia Law School, Tulane Law School, Syracuse School of Law and other law schools who have passed or are in the process of passing this resolution in their respective communities.

The Gonzales Case

Jessica Gonzales (now Lenahan) obtained a temporary restraining order after separating with Simon Gonzales after he exhibited a long period of increasingly erratic and abusive behavior towards the family.

On June 22, 1999 Rebecca, Kathryn, and Leslie Gonzales went on an afternoon bike ride and were reported missing by 5:30. Jessica spoke to the police on the phone and in person at least ten times within an 8 hour period. She also conducted her own investigation during this time by driving by Simon's house, speaking to Simon (who admitted he had the children) and speaking to Simon's girlfriend. Jessica relayed all information to the police at multiple intervals throughout the period, yet no attempt to investigate ensued.

At 3:25 am, Simon arrived at the police station and opened fire. The police shot and killed Simon and discovered the murdered bodies of the girls in the bed of Simon's pickup truck. Jessica sought action against the officers and the town of Castle Rock.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) protects the right to life, liberty and personal security. After the Supreme Court denied her protection, Jessica's legal team brought her case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). The IACHR found the United States responsible for human rights violations and recommended the following policy reform for Domestic Violence Law:

- Create effective mechanisms to protect women from violence and adequate resources to foster their implementation
- Mandate the enforcement of protection orders and other precautionary measures
- Continue adopting policies and programs to restructure stereotypes of domestic violence victims

We need your support in the form of a letter which we will provide to you or your agency. Please help us in this historic effort to draw attention to this issue during Domestic Violence Awareness month this October 2012.

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