

Cindy Clemishire Testifies Against Gateway Church Founder Robert Morris

Robert Morris, founder of the influential Gateway Church in Southlake, Texas, has been indicted by a multicounty grand jury in Oklahoma following serious allegations of child sexual abuse. Cindy Clemishire, now a 55-year-old grandmother, says Morris abused her for years beginning when she was just 12 years old—a trauma that, she says, has taken a lifetime to confront and begin healing from.

As reported by The Christian Post, Clemishire recently testified before the Texas House Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence Committee in support of House Bill 748, also known as “Trey’s Law.” The bill would ban the use of nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) in civil settlements involving victims of child sexual abuse and trafficking—agreements that often silence victims and protect predators.

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Clemishire told lawmakers she didn’t even realize she had been abused until she was in her mid-30s.

“I was 35 the first time I truly accepted and believed that he abused me, that it was criminal, and I understood what grooming was,” she said. “And that changed the course of my journey to more healing, and there’s anger, of course, involved in that.”

Back in 1982, in the quiet town of Hominy, Oklahoma, Clemishire lived a sheltered life. “Innocence was very different than it is now most of the time,” she recalled. “We didn’t carry computers around in our hands and we had six

channels maybe on our televisions.”

Even when she reported the abuse at age 17, she says she was treated like the one who had done something wrong. “Even to the extent that Robert Morris’ wife, Debbie, called to tell me she forgave me,” Clemishire said. “I was thankful because I felt like I had done something wrong and I had been treated as though I had done something wrong by Robert.”

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Trey’s Law is named after Trey Carlock, who died by suicide just before his 29th birthday after signing an NDA to settle his own abuse case involving Kanakuk Kamps in Missouri. His abuser, Pete Newman, was convicted of molesting dozens of children and received two life sentences plus 30 years.

Trey’s sister, Elizabeth Phillips, told the committee, “My brother referred to his settlement as blood money as if he had betrayed his own soul to keep Kanakuk secrets, and it killed him.” She urged lawmakers to pass the bill “as an urgent matter of public safety.”

With unanimous support from the committee, the bill now heads to the full Texas House.

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