

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Criminal Jurisprudence
For HB 55

Compiled on: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 3:07 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: March 7, 2023 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

Bonita Tribble, Ms.

Midland County District Attorneys Office
Midland, TX

I am writing today in support of HB 55. As someone who prosecutes these kinds of crimes, I believe HB 55 will help law enforcement stop sexual predators before they escalate to more serious crimes. In 2018 I prosecuted a local physician whose practice consisted of liposuction and small cosmetic procedures like lip injections and botox. He sexually assaulted multiple patients under the guise of treatment or examination. Many more came forward to report that he had groped their breasts as part of an exam in a manner completely inconsistent with how breast exams are given. Additionally, breast augmentation was never part of his practice. Several of these women tried to report these indecent assaults to the police but chose not to follow through with the charges when they were told it was only a Class C offense. They were aware of the angst and judgement that awaited them upon reporting a local, well liked, doctor and did not feel it was worth the humiliation when the punishment was just a fine, if anything at all. All of these women were sexually assaulted by him in some form but at the time the law essentially ignored and minimized the indecent assaults. Had it been possible to charge him with something more substantial, it is very likely he would have been stopped before he was able to assault many of these women. He violated them physically and emotionally. Women are completely vulnerable when we are being examined by a doctor, often only covered by a thin paper apron. This doctor abused that trust in the most vile way possible and was only held accountable for a fraction of the harm he caused. Those who provide health care services and mental health services must be held accountable when they abuse the trust placed in them by assaulting those they have a duty to care for. HB 55 is a huge step toward justice for the victims of these crimes.