

To the Distinguished Members of the Defense Advisory Committee on Investigation, Prosecution, and Defense of Sexual Assault in the Armed Forces:

As both a former victim advocate and now a survivor within the Marine Corps, I provide this testimony to highlight systemic failures that undermine the Secretary of the Navy's stated priorities of dignity, respect, and command accountability. It is a tragic example of 2d Marine Aircraft Wing and II Marine Expeditionary Force blatantly ignoring the Department of Defense / Department of the Navy Safe to Report Policies. My experience demonstrates how command practices not only fail to protect individual Marines but actively jeopardize force readiness, retention, and the core principles of military justice.

My Experience: A Breakdown of Leadership and Accountability

Last summer, my two year old daughter and I endured a terrifying assault that exemplifies the Marine Corps' failure to protect those who report abuse. I pulled into my driveway with my sleeping toddler in my arms when my abuser appeared. He forced his way into my home. I tried to run—to escape through the back door with my daughter—but I didn't make it in time. He grabbed me, claiming he just wanted to "talk."

In survival mode, I convinced him to sit down while I laid my daughter down. I managed to dial 911. When he realized what I was doing, he attacked—shoving me into a bookshelf and slamming me to the ground, all while my terrified daughter screamed. He shattered my phone during the call but didn't know I had a backup. With it, I called again, yelling my address repeatedly before he could stop me.

Eight police cars arrived that night. He was arrested the next day. Unfortunately, this was not the first nor was it the last of the attacks that were done to me.

The Cost of Reporting: Retaliation and Command Failures

I feared reporting from the start. Having worked as a victim advocate, I already understood the culture of gossip, ostracism, and retaliation within commands. I knew how my own leadership dismissed victims, trivialized their trauma, and destroyed their careers. I lived with the fear of what my command would do to me, but I also lived in fear of my abuser—of the stalking, blackmail, beatings, rapes, and death threats he inflicted on me.

I only reported because I thought he was going to kill me. Even then, I was met with disbelief and inaction at every turn.

Command Failures from Initial Report:

On September 9, 2022, I made an unrestricted report to a Major and a Sergeant Major within 2d MAW, following the unrestricted report I made at Family Advocacy. The Major then failed to notify NCIS on September 18, 2022 following another unrestricted report, as required. The Major's response - "I appreciate YOU being the victim" - and subsequent gossip about my case

demonstrated the command's immediate bias. Their false assurances that my attacker would remain in jail left me vulnerable to further assault.

The command's manipulation of my expedited transfer request demonstrates calculated retaliation. After my attacker's release from jail heightened my safety concerns, I requested transfer from Cherry Point. While on leave following approval, I checked into Wounded Warrior Battalion East. However, at leave's end, I was ordered back to Cherry Point and placed in a particular squadron, where the Major General had me held on suicide watch, confined to an office without freedom to leave. The command then permanently assigned me to another squadron, where a LtCol mockingly dismissed my knowledge of my permanent change of assignment orders while attempting to send me back to MCAS Cherry Point - the very location I had been approved to leave for my safety. This deliberate interference with my expedited transfer exposed the command's pattern of using administrative processes to further victimize Marines who report assault.

The progression of violence and command retaliation escalated severely. When he violated the MPO just five hours after issuance, I reported immediately. His forced entry into my home leading to another sexual assault and subsequent physical assault and attempted sexual assault left me with a traumatic brain injury. From September 2022 through April 2024, I've endured multiple emergency room visits documenting:

- Debilitating migraines
- Frequent fainting episodes
- Severe vision disturbances
- Dizziness and vomiting
- Numbness/tingling in arms/fingers
- Involuntary tremors
- Inability to exercise - devastating for an active Marine

Command interference with medical care became systematic under a Major from May through July 2023. He:

- Cancelled and changed appointments at base medical
- Interfered with my treatment at Intrepid Spirit Concussion Recovery Clinic, a specialized TBI military treatment facility
- Lied to providers about a July 24, 2023 separation date
- Blocked access to mental health care
- Compromised my medical privacy
- Created an environment of fear around seeking treatment
- Created mistrust in the medical officer assigned to the squadron

Despite my attacker's civilian conviction and confession, the Major General at 2d MAW repeatedly:

- Ignored the conviction evidence

- Dismissed documented confessions
- Used unproven misconduct allegations against me
- Failed to acknowledge ongoing stalking reports
- Enabled systematic protection of a convicted predator

The male 2d MAW Commanding General's and the male II Marine Expeditionary Force Lieutenant General's Corruption of Board Process:

- Prosecuted *me* for fraternization and violating a military protective order protecting *him*.
- Judged by an all-male Board; all male prosecutors; male legal advisor; male SJA
- Ordered verbatim transcription but permitted omission of crucial (and the only) defense witness testimony and argument
- Allowed recharacterization of documented assault as "fraternization"
- Ignored critical context of March 2022 period where:
 - Blackmail began before my departure
 - Multiple physical and sexual assaults occurred upon return BEFORE I reported
 - I was caring for both my child and his abandoned child
 - Stalking and coercion were ongoing
 - I was actively reporting through proper channels
- Enabled command's false narrative despite civilian conviction
- Permitted misleading government recounting of events
- Failed to ensure proper investigations were conducted at all levels

[Note: The Board still only substantiated "frat" b/w me and my attacker *before* I reported the sexual violence. It did not find that I violated any MPO, etc.]

The command's pattern of punishing me for reporting attacks created a dangerous cycle of forced silence:

- Each time police arrested my attacker, the command accused me of misconduct
- When he broke into my apartment in January 2024, destroying everything I owned, I could only file a police report - fear of command retaliation prevented me from pressing charges
- The command's practice of writing supplemental misconduct reports for his actions forced me to endure further abuse in silence
- Each time I reported to the police, despite my civilian protection order, I was met with resistance because I was the subject of an MPO

Current life-threatening situation:

- Attacker maintains active warrant in North Carolina
- Command keeps me tethered within his reach despite approved June 2024 medical retirement

- January 2024 apartment break-in demonstrated escalating violence
- My four year old must act as medical caregiver due to untreated TBI
- Mental health providers warn I cannot heal while my abuser and command continue traumatizing me
- Critical medical evaluations remains inaccessible while symptoms worsen

Base access and safety compromised:

- MPO weaponized to require daily searches at gates
- Private information accessed through military systems
- Forced to join address confidentiality program
- Changed vehicles, phone numbers, email repeatedly
- Each police report leads to command retaliation

This is exactly why I didn't report sooner. It is why other Marines fear coming forward. When the command minimizes assault to "consensual fraternization," they send a clear message: victims will be punished, and abusers will be protected.

Misuse of Administrative Actions

My command didn't stop at failing to protect me—they actively retaliated. They waited until after I accepted my career designation, hoping they were finally taking my reports seriously, before notifying me of intent to impose NJP. When I refused NJP, they issued a Page 11 instead. I rebutted it, and they escalated to issuing a Report of Misconduct.

The investigative process surrounding this Report of Misconduct was fraught with lies and omissions. The investigating officer falsely claimed I had declined the right to participate—despite never being contacted. Again, the command ignored his civilian conviction, his confession, and I received a supplemental misconduct report following his assault on me last summer. They framed me, the victim, as the problem.

This deliberate manipulation of investigations and misuse of administrative actions culminated in a Board of Inquiry grossly mishandled by the government where, again, key defense witness testimony and argument was omitted, evidence misrepresented, and false narratives advanced to support the command's version of events. This is not hyperbole – THE GOVERNMENT "LOST OR DESTROYED" the audio recording from my April 2024 Board of Inquiry where my witnesses testified and attorney made arguments. It's as if I was held accountable for abuse I never consented to—simply because my abuser was enlisted, and I was an officer.

Interference with Medical Care and Retirement

Even as I tried to recover, my command interfered with my medical care and approved medical retirement. I suffer from a traumatic brain injury (TBI) sustained during the assault and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) caused by the abuse I endured. They went so far as to lie to my medical providers, omitting key details of my abuser's misconduct to manipulate medical opinions in their favor. This interference not only delayed my care but actively endangered my

health and readiness. It prevented access to care for months to follow because of the claims made that I was separating by July 24, 2023.

This is what led to my medical evaluation board referral. I could not get the needed access to care while active duty and my neurologist was worried by my worsening symptoms. Despite these documented injuries, my command obstructed treatment and ignored dual processing requirements, calling me to inform me that “you will be getting administratively separated not out on a ‘medboard’” once I received the findings of my medical evaluation board I was found unfit due to the conditions I suffer as a direct result of the abuse inflicted upon me. **I was approved for medical retirement with a medical retirement date of late May/early June 2024.**

The Broader Impact: A Broken System

My experience is not unique—it is indicative of a broader systemic failure in leadership accountability, one that prioritizes protecting commands over protecting Marines. Commands wield administrative actions as weapons of retaliation, manipulate investigations, and undermine victims’ medical recovery, creating an environment where reporting abuse feels more dangerous than remaining silent.

This culture doesn’t just harm individual Marines; it erodes trust, fractures unit cohesion, and degrades force readiness. When survivors are punished, and predators are protected, it sends a message that military service comes at the cost of safety and justice.

Recommendations for Reform

To restore accountability and protect Marines, I urge your committee to recommend the following reforms:

1. **Independent oversight** of command responses to sexual assault reports to prevent misuse of administrative actions and protective measures.
2. **Immediate safeguards** for medical care and retirement processing to protect injured Marines from command interference.
3. **Removal of protective order implementation from command control** to prevent their weaponization against victims.
4. **Reform of investigative and judicial processes**, ensuring transparency, inclusion of victim testimony, and independent review of command findings.
5. **Consequences for commands** that manipulate evidence, obstruct medical care, and retaliate against victims.
6. **Protect expedited transfer processes** to ensure Marines are not unfairly removed from safe locations, being placed once again under unnecessary stress and torment.

Conclusion

I stand before you as both a victim advocate who once believed in the system and a survivor betrayed by it. My case demonstrates the urgent need for reform. Every day that commands can

minimize assaults, punish victims, and protect abusers is another day that the Marine Corps fails its Marines and compromises its mission.

Your recommendations can bring the meaningful change necessary to rebuild trust and protect those who serve. I urge you to act decisively to ensure that no Marine faces what I have endured.

Thank you for your time and attention.