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Statement of Michele

Hello, everyone. Thank you for being here and thank you to Gloria and John for all of their support, as this is a very difficult time for me and my family. I have recently gone through the worst time of my life. It is hard to express in words everything that I have gone through as it is very traumatizing and it's affecting every aspect of my life. After the sexual assault, I was a wreck dealing with feelings of anger, sadness, depression, shame and disbelief. The only consolation I had was that I put my faith in the Riverside D.A.'s office that justice would be done. However, I was wrong - very, very wrong - as I received a call telling me that the D.A.'s office was not going to prosecute. I felt like I was in a dream and I couldn't even speak. I had to get off the phone immediately. I was in total shock. I felt like a zombie for hours until the shock turned into complete despair and hysterics. I had such a pain in my chest that I thought I was having a heart attack and my family was going to take me to the hospital. I was inconsolable for days not being able to get out of bed, but eventually I got the strength to get up and the despair changed to anger which continues today.

I could not comprehend why the D.A. was not prosecuting. I was raped and taken advantage of while I was inebriated. The person who raped me was an employee at Pechanga, and because he was an employee, I put my trust in him believing that he would act in my best interest to help me. Well, the only thing he helped me with was ruining

my life. After being victimized by him that horrible night I was then victimized again by the D.A.'s office when I was told they weren't going to prosecute. I am furious, confused and depressed by all of this. Unless you have gone through something like this yourself, you cannot imagine how hard it is to come forward in

the first place and then to be basically told that D.A.'s office will not seek justice for you.

This is obviously a very sensitive situation for me. This decision to speak out today has not been a rash one, and without the support of my family and friends, there's no way I would be able to be here today. Their support gives me the strength to stand up to Pechanga and to the Riverside D.A.'s office to say that this is not OK! The decision of the District Attorney's office not to prosecute tells women not to believe that there will be justice for them. This is an insult to all women who have been sexually assaulted and a travesty of our justice system. It was not easy to come forward in the first place and definitely not easy standing in front of all of you today but there's no way I'm going to allow Pechanga and the D.A. to get away with this and I'm not going to be silenced.

Michele
Represented by attorney Gloria Allred
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