



National Task Force  
to End Sexual and  
Domestic Violence Against Women

October 29, 2015

Dear Representative,

The National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women (NTF) represents a large and diverse group of national, tribal, state, territorial, and local organizations, as well as individuals, committed to securing an end to violence against women. Along with our coalition partners we include civil rights organizations, labor unions, advocates for children and youth, anti-poverty groups, immigrant and refugee rights organizations, women's rights leaders, education groups, and others focusing on a wide range of social, economic, and racial justice issues.

The advocates, service providers, and stakeholders in our networks see every day the widespread and devastating impacts of campus sexual assault upon survivors. College sexual assault survivors suffer high rates of PTSD, depression, and drug or alcohol abuse, which can hamper both their ability to succeed in school and future employment. At the same time, only a small percentage of these cases are reported, sanctioned by campus judicial boards, or prosecuted, allowing offenders to go without punishment as well as creating an unsafe environment for students.

The NTF and the over 220 undersigned organizations write to express our opposition to the Safe Campus Act of 2015 (H.R. 3403) and the Fair Campus Act of 2015 (H.R. 3408). Both bills threaten to undermine the protections of Title IX and the critical progress policy makers, universities, advocates, students and survivors are making to end the scourge of sexual assault on campus. Every student has a right to an education free from sexual harassment and violence. When campus environments are hostile because of sexual harassment, assault, or violence, students cannot learn and miss out on true educational opportunities. In order to encourage educational attainment, we must expand options for survivors, rather than limit them. Sexual violence is prevalent at all colleges and universities and impacts all students, but even one incident is one too many. In addition, it remains a seriously underreported crime. The Safe Campus Act and the Fair Campus Act will not help in solving these problems and will, in fact, make campuses less safe for survivors.

The Safe Campus Act inappropriately conflates the roles of colleges and universities and the criminal justice system in responding to campus sexual violence, while claiming to support a more fair process. Requiring schools to wait until law enforcement acts, even if only at the behest of the survivor, ignores the actions schools can and must take to combat sexual violence. Current laws such as Title IX require schools to respond to campus sexual assault because students' civil rights are on the line. Additionally, schools also have a role in addressing sexual harassment and violence on campus because they are best equipped to provide interim measures and accommodations. Accommodations such as class schedule or housing changes, for instance, are necessary to survivors' ability to complete their education.

Schools are also best situated to assess and remedy such incidents, in an administrative setting and according to their established student codes of conduct and anti-discrimination policies. Appropriately,

schools are not in the business of imposing criminal punishments. Those decisions are left to the authorities in charge of criminal investigation and prosecution, if a survivor chooses to pursue that course. The school's civil rights investigation and any law enforcement criminal investigation represent parallel and equally necessary paths. We completely reject the argument that only one system in our nation should be held accountable for keeping young people safe from sexual violence. We all want a robust criminal justice response to rape. The criminal justice system does not operate in a vacuum and all systems where our young people learn and grow and live—communities of faith, neighborhoods, the military, schools, and institutions of higher learning—must address this tragic problem that traumatizes so many. By requiring the criminal process to move forward in order for survivors to have access to the disciplinary process on campus, the Safe Campus Act limits the options campus sexual assault survivors have and makes it more difficult for them to seek justice.

In addition, both the Safe Campus Act and the Fair Campus Act would require changes to schools' disciplinary processes that would be overly onerous when incidents of sexual violence occur. We oppose these provisions, which would allow institutions to determine their own burden of proof and allow offenders and offenders' attorneys unfettered and inappropriate access to question survivors and to information about survivors. Specifically, we oppose altering the burden of proof that schools use in disciplinary proceedings related to sexual discrimination, including harassment and violence, because these are not criminal trials. The currently used preponderance standard is in keeping with other similar civil and administrative proceedings. There is ample legal precedent for administrative responses to sexual misconduct in non-educational settings. Under Title VII, employers—including colleges and universities—must conduct their own investigations of sexual harassment complaints and take remedial actions, often including terminating an employee found responsible for harassment. We additionally oppose provisions in both bills that prevent institutions from acting quickly to sanction student groups that engage in discriminatory and abusive behavior. Such interim measures can be key to alleviating a hostile environment on campus even while investigations are ongoing.

We are eager to work together to stop sexual violence on campus but oppose both the Safe Campus Act and the Fair Campus Act for taking a misguided approach to tackling the issue. If you have any questions please contact Terri Poore with the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, [terri@endsexualviolence.org](mailto:terri@endsexualviolence.org), or Anne Hedgepeth with the American Association of University Women, 202/785-7724 or [hedgepetha@aauw.org](mailto:hedgepetha@aauw.org).

Sincerely,

National Organizations

All Women Marching for Hope  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American Federation of Teachers  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence  
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network  
Center for Women Policy Studies  
Champion Women  
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues  
Clery Center for Security On Campus  
End Rape On Campus  
Futures Without Violence

General Federation of Women's Clubs  
Human Rights Campaign  
Hu-MAN Up  
JWI  
Legal Momentum  
Media Equity Collaborative  
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity  
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
National Center for Victims of Crime  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE)  
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Domestic Violence Hotline  
National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)  
National Organization for Women  
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence  
National Women's Law Center  
National Women's Political Caucus  
NOW's First Virtual Chapter - Young Feminists & Allies (YFA)  
National Sexual Violence Resource Center  
Peace Over Violence  
SASHA Center  
SurvJustice  
The Network/La Red  
The TheoPRO Group  
Victim Rights Law Center  
YWCA USA

#### State and Local Organizations

##### Alabama

Victims of Crime & Leniency, Central Alabama Chapter

##### Alaska

Alaska Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

##### Arizona

Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence  
Catholic Community Services

##### Arkansas

Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
Family Violence Prevention, Inc.  
Women & Children First

##### California

California Coalition Against Sexual Assault

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence  
California Women's Law Center  
Monterey County Rape Crisis Center  
Rape Crisis Intervention & Prevention  
Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center  
Sherwood Artworks, Inc.

#### Colorado

Justice & Mercy Legal Aid Clinic  
RESPONSE  
Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence  
The Phoenix Center at Auraria  
Zonta Royal Gorge Region

#### Connecticut

Center for Family Justice  
Chrysalis Domestic Violence Services  
CONNSACS  
Susan B. Anthony Project, Inc.  
The Center for Family Justice  
The Center for Sexual Assault Crisis Counseling and Education  
Women's Center of Greater Danbury, Inc.  
YWCA New Britain

#### District of Columbia

DC Rape Crisis Center

#### Florida

Brevard NOW  
Florida Council Against Sexual Violence

#### Georgia

Ahimsa House  
Educating Georgians for Gun Safety  
Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Georgia Rural Urban Summit  
Rape Response

#### Illinois

Call for Help, Inc.  
Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation  
Community Crisis Center  
Growing Strong Sexual Assault Center  
Guardian Angel Community Services  
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
KC-CASA

## Pillars

Rape Advocacy, Counseling, & Education Services  
Rape Victim Advocates  
Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling  
SafePath Survivor Resources  
Sexual Assault Counseling and Information Service  
West Suburban NOW  
Western Illinois Regional Council/Community Action Agency

## Indiana

A Better Way Services, Inc.

## Iowa

CAASA  
Cedar Valley Friends of the Family  
Council on Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence  
Crisis Intervention Service  
Crisis Intervention Services  
Domestic Violence Intervention Program  
Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
SafePath Survivor Resources

## Kansas

Family Crisis Center, Inc.  
Harvey County DV/SA Task Force, Inc.  
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence  
LARC DVS Inc.  
SOS

## Maine

Family Crisis Services  
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services

## Maryland

Dove Center  
Empowerment Center  
Life Crisis Center, Inc.  
Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center Inc.  
The Women's Law Center of Maryland  
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault

## Massachusetts

Jane Doe Inc., MA Coalition Against Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence

## Michigan

Equality Michigan

Michigan Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence  
Turning Point  
YWCA of Kalamazoo

Minnesota

Bluff Country Family Resources, Inc.  
HOPE Coalition  
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault  
North Shore Horizons  
SCSU Women's Center  
Sexual Violence Center  
The Aurora Center, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Mississippi

MS Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
MS Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Missouri

Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence  
Missouri Women's Political Caucus

Montana

HRDC  
Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

Nebraska

Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence

Nevada

Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence

New Hampshire

Bridges

New Jersey

Displaced Homemakers Network of New Jersey, Inc.  
Middlesex Co NOW-NJ  
National Organization for Women of New Jersey (NOW-NJ)  
Northern NJ Chapter, National Organization for Women  
Ocean County (NJ) NOW

New Mexico

Family Crisis Center

New York

Day One  
New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault

#### North Carolina

A Safe Home for Everyone  
Black and Bling  
North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence

#### North Dakota

CAWS North Dakota  
Community Violence Intervention Center

#### Ohio

ACTION OHIO Coalition For Battered Women  
COMPASS (Sexual Assault Education, Prevention & Support)  
Crime Victim Services, Staff member  
Liberty Center Connections, Inc, Every Woman's House  
Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
Ohio Domestic Violence Network  
Open Arms Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Services  
Project Woman  
Rape Crisis Domestic Violence Safe Haven  
Southern Ohio Sexual Assault Treatment Center  
Survivor Advocacy Outreach Program  
Tri-County Help Center, Inc.

#### Oregon

Central Oregon Coast NOW  
Oregon NOW (National Organization for Women)

#### Pennsylvania

Centre Co. Women's Resource Center  
Clinton County Women's Center  
Crime Victim Center of Erie County, Inc.  
Ni-ta-nee NOW  
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR)  
Pennsylvania NOW  
SAFE  
SARCC  
The Abuse Network, Inc.  
Transitions of PA  
VOICE  
WOAR  
Women In Need  
Women In Transition  
Women's Center of Beaver County  
Women's Law Project  
Women's Resource Center

YWCA Carlisle

Rhode Island

Day One

RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence

RI NOW

Tennessee

CEASE Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Inc.

Family Resource Agency

Partnership for Families, Children and Adults, Inc.

Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence

Texas

Concho Valley Rape Crisis Center

Our Voices

Resource Center

Texas Association Against Sexual Assault

Utah

Restoring Ancestral Winds

Virginia

Blue Ridge AAF. Inc.

Charlottesville National Organization for Women

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

Washington

Forks Abuse Program

King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence

NOW Tacoma Chapter

Seattle Chapter - National Organization for Women

Thurston County National Organization for Women

Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs

Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Washington State National Organization for Women

West Virginia

CONTACT

Shenandoah Women's Center

The Family Refuge Center

West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services

Women's Aid in Crisis

Wisconsin

Daystar Inc

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin



Family & Children Center  
Family Advocates, Inc.  
Friends of Abused Families  
Milwaukee Center for Children and Youth  
PADA  
PAVEDC  
Personal Development Center  
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Family Violence Prevention  
Safe Harbor of Sheboygan, Inc.  
The Bridge to Hope  
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA)