



Oregon

John A. Kitzhaber, Governor

MEASURE: HB 4084
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2012 SESSION H HUMAN SERVICES
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SUBMITTED BY: Sunny Petit

Testimony in Support of HB 4077, the Healthy Teen Relationships Act
Friday, February 3, 2012, 3 p.m., House Human Services Committee

Co-Chairs Tomei and Gilliam, Vice-Chairs Thompson and Frederick, Rep. Greenlick, Rep. Harker, Rep. Parrish, and Rep Weidner:

The Oregon Commission for Women, in its role of advocate for the women of Oregon, strongly supports this bill. Of the murders committed in Oregon in the past two years, **half of the victims were women and children killed in domestic violence**. The roots of domestic violence lie in the attitudes developed by young men and women in their teens, which is why this bill is so important. Teen dating violence should be defined to include not only injurious or threatening behavior, but also "harassing" conduct in school settings between dating partners as defined in ORS 166.065.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recently released its 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey. According to the survey, Oregon has the **second highest incidence of rape in the nation: 27 percent**. The study estimates that **409,000 Oregon women** have been subject to rape at some point in their lifetime. Looking at sexual violence other than rape, **837,000 Oregon women** have been victims.

The Commission believes that we must send a clear message to young men and women as they start dating that violence is unacceptable. According to the CDC survey, nearly 80% of female victims of rape experience rape before the age of 25, with 42% being raped before the age of 18.

Teens need to learn how to have healthy relationships. Pop culture and behavior seen in the home may not model appropriate behavior. If we want to stop the epidemic of sexual violence, we need to understand it and create programs to prevent it before entrenched attitudes develop in the formative teen years and to support victims. We also need to adequately fund those programs and assist our local school boards with implementing statewide policy initiatives.

Please vote Aye on HB 4077.

Sincerely,

Sunny Petit, Chair
Oregon Commission for Women

Jenny Greenleaf, Vice Chair
Oregon Commission for Women

OR Commission for Women

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