



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

House Judiciary Committee
Letter in Support of HB 3476
March, 25, 2015

Chair Barker, Vice–Chair Olson, and members of the Committee,

As interim president of the University of Oregon, I am pleased to provide support of House Bill 3476.

As I shared with another committee in December, the University of Oregon is committed to improving how we prevent and respond to sexual assault, which includes support for survivors. The UO's public mission is to ensure our students receive a quality education. That is only possible when they feel safe, respected and supported. It is both our moral obligation and a legal requirement for us to work to educate, prevent and respond to sexual assault. And when an assault does occur, to provide an environment in which survivors of sexual assault feel confident and safe seeking support, receive services, and understand their options for reporting. This is very important to me—as university president, as a father, and as an academic who has spent some time researching gender issues.

To clearly reaffirm our commitment to supporting survivors and protecting our student's privacy, last week the UO acting Senior Vice President and Provost Frances Bronet worked with our Vice President for Student Life, members of our faculty and our General Council to outline how the university will safeguard our student's privacy so they are able to seek confidential advocacy and support. House Bill 3476 complements these efforts and we welcome the initiative from our state and federal partners to provide clarity to rules and guidelines as we continue to bolster our own best practices and policies within the university.

The issue of sexual assault on college campuses across the nation is a problem we must all address together – from the many advocates, experts, counselors and therapists on the University of Oregon campus who are available around the clock, and who work with great passion and energy to care for our students, to the state legislature and members of our congressional delegation who care just as passionately. This issue must remain a priority.

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In addition to my support of this bill, the UO is implementing a comprehensive set of initiatives and engaging in robust policy discussions designed to change our campus culture, expand our prevention and education programs, add to our ability to investigate and hold perpetrators accountable, and provide services and support to our student who experience any form of sexual misconduct. Throughout this process, we have learned that it takes everyone—from bystanders and counselors, to university presidents and legislators—to turn the tide on the epidemic that is sexual assault. It is on all of us.

Thank you for your leadership and partnership in this effort. The University of Oregon remains committed to working with you to support Oregon students access and pursuit of a post-secondary education in a safe environment free from sexual assault.

Sincerely,



Scott Coltrane
Interim President
University of Oregon