

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission for Women
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
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Testimony in Support of SB 759
April 2, 2015, Hearing Room C, 1 pm
Senate Committee on Education

Chair Roblan; Vice-chair Knopp; and Senators Baertschiger, Beyer, Gelser, Hass, and Kruse:

The Oregon Commission for Women, in its role of advocate for the women of Oregon, strongly supports SB 759. Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Rape is the most common form of violent assault on campuses across America. The statistics on campus rapes nationally show that freshman and sophomore female students are the most likely targets of sexual assault and that 18% of all college students have personally experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault. (National Institute of Justice, CSA Study, 2007) Many never report such incidents fearing reprisal by their attacker, who is often known to them, and many more drop out following the attack as they suffer the fear and psychological harm that follow such attacks.

Oregon's college students are among our most vital assets. As Oregonians, we must have surety that for those targeted and affected by the devastating consequences of sexual assault on college campuses, that we are ready to help them report it and come back from it with easy to find and professionally provided support services on our 4 year campuses. SB 759 provides that needed baseline of sexual assault protocol, anonymous reporting, and professional support service for all of Oregon's 4 year universities that have students enrolled through Oregon Opportunity Grants.

Oregon Commission for Women urges an Aye vote on SB 759. It is the right way to go to assure that sexual assault reporting and support is taken seriously and is fully implemented wherever our young people are investing in their futures at 4 year institutions.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Vardavas, Chair, Oregon Commission for Women

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