



Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force

TESTIMONY in Support of SB 188A
Submitted to the House Committee on Judiciary
Submitted by: Michele Roland-Schwartz, Executive Director

April 29, 2015

Honorable Jeff Barker, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

On behalf of the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force, I submit this testimony in support of SB 188, an important mechanism to hold offenders, who choose to use technology as a form of sexual violence, accountable.

The Sexual Assault Task Force is a private, non-profit, non-governmental statewide agency whose mission is to *facilitate and support a victim-centered approach to the prevention of and response to adolescent and adult sexual violence through multi-disciplinary collaboration*. The Task Force is comprised of over 100 appointed Oregonians representing a wide array of local and statewide community partners, including: community and systems-based advocates, violence prevention educators, law enforcement, medical professionals, criminal justice system practitioners, policy makers, youth, and survivors of sexual violence.

SB 188, The Unlawful Dissemination of an Intimate Image

The disclosure of intimate images without consent causes devastating harm, as victims experience threats of sexual assault, stalking, harassment, shaming, and in some cases, loss of a job or employment opportunities, and the need to transfer to a different school – not to mention ongoing humiliation as images are exposed to innumerable viewers on multiple social media and website platforms. The emotional impact of victim experiences include: anxiety, depression, hyper-vigilance, and isolation.¹ The experiences we've tracked nationally and in Oregon highlight that this destructive conduct is mostly perpetrated against women, often within the context of an unhealthy, coercive, and abusive relationship. Victims often disengage and restrict their technological and online usage, which only serves to further isolate and burden them with feelings of guilt and shame, while offenders are left without fearing any consequences for their actions.

¹ Without My Consent. Preliminary Report: Without My Consent Survey of Online Stalking, Harassment and Violations of Privacy. 2014. Retrieved from http://www.docstoc.com/docs/document-preview.aspx?doc_id=172507797

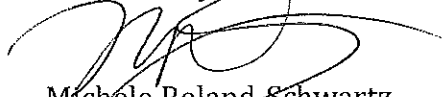
This issue has been an important agenda item for the Sexual Assault Task Force as we engaged our members and partners in discussions about the nuances and complexity of this burgeoning phenomenon for well over a year. We partnered with an *Oregon State University Policy Analysis Laboratory* graduate research assistant to conduct a review of national legislation in an effort to inform policies in Oregon. Additionally, stakeholders across Oregon have shared the countless ways in which victims have been impacted, and the mounting frustration they experience not being able to hold the offender accountable.

SB 188 would add Oregon to the list of other states who have passed (New Jersey, Alaska, Texas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin), or have introduced or pending legislation (Alabama, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, New York, Oklahoma, Washington, and Washington, D.C.) to address this conduct.²

The Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force urges you to pass SB 188, establishing the nonconsensual dissemination of an intimate image as unlawful.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this bill, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Michele Roland-Schwartz
Executive Director

² Mary Anne Franks. *Drafting An Effective "Revenge Porn" Law: A Guide for Legislators*. January 10, 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.endrevengeporn.org/guide-to-legislation/>