



Oregon Voices  
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February 14, 2017

Senate Education Committee  
Sen. Arnie Roblan, Chair  
Sen. Dennis Linthicum, Vice Chair  
Sen. Sara Gelsler  
Sen. Mark Hass  
Sen. Jeff Kruse

Chair Roblan and members of the committee:

On behalf of Oregon Voices, a group who advocate for evidence-based practices in dealing with sex offenses, I am writing in support of SB 318. Indeed, I am grateful to the sponsors of the measure for bringing it forward. We all know that we have a significant problem with interpersonal violence in our schools and colleges. I am particularly aware of the latter problem from 47 years on the campus of Willamette University, both as a faculty member and as an administrator. It is also a problem that touched my family; my niece was a rape victim at the University of Montana. I believe this bill may do more to reduce interpersonal violence and violation than any other single thing we can do.

I have looked at and thought carefully about sexual violence and violation among young people for a long time. We all know that there are some serial abusers who leave multiple victims in their wake. But the evidence I have seen suggests that many more victims are created by bad choices—bad choices made by young people who have never thought searchingly about responsible sexual behavior, and who are often woefully ignorant of what the law requires in this area. This bill can do much to change irresponsible behavior patterns that do life-long damage to young lives.

I am particularly interested in this bill for another reason as well. We have lots of good evidence to indicate that the overwhelming majority of new sex crimes are committed by someone who has never been arrested for a sexual infraction before. According to one highly regarded and widely referenced study, more than 95% of new sex crimes are committed by persons never arrested before. Thus, a thoughtful and frank educational program such as the one envisioned by this bill may be our best hope to prevent personal abuse, by intervening before it happens.

I know that budget issues will drive this session, but this bill seems to offer a plan that will entail modest costs with the promise of substantial gains. Please vote this bill on, and advocate for it widely among your colleagues in this session.

Sincerely,

Ken Nolley