

Chair Williamson, Vice-Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger and Members of the House Judiciary Committee-

I'm a resident of Oregon and a supporter of sexual assault survivors, as well as a parent to first and second grades daughters in our public school system and I support passing HB 2657.

Like many, I grew up without the financial means to afford college without significant assistance or service with the military. I attended high school in the late 1990s and was aware of sexual violence in the military so wanted to avoid that route. While my grades and test scores were able to earn the necessary scholarships, I unfortunately learned that college students weren't immune to sexual violence, either. When I was attacked at the age of 19, I wanted to report the encounter and was horrified that each of my five roommates said it had happened to them, and my reporting efforts wouldn't be worth it. While they showed empathy and concern, they seemed to suggest this was a rite of passage, as all the women they knew had also encountered a similar scenario of acquaintance rape. Throughout my life, many women have since shared similar stories. Reports indicate at least half of all women and at least one out of six men experience sexual violence in Oregon.

While my lived experience indicates it happens to nearly all women, according to sexual assault survivor Brenda Tracy, only 10% of men in our society perpetuate these crimes. Brenda is the founder of "Set The Expectations," a nonprofit whose work primarily addresses groups, typically male college athletes, to appeal to the 90% of men who don't commit these crimes and help them understand how they can be strong allies, and help prevent sexual violence by teaching them bystander tools to intervene in situations that could otherwise perpetuate rape culture.

Clackamas Women's Services (CWS) has a program for male high school athletes called Coaching Boys into Men, which utilizes the influence of coaches in young men's lives to engage athletes in preventing violence. CWS also has age-appropriate curriculum for all students in our K-12 system, including training on consent and healthy relationship, teen dating violence and responding to abuse.

This Violence Prevention Education bill allows for funding to address these issues of unnecessary violence BEFORE students graduate high school, by providing comprehensive training for our students that will protect our state, and beyond. The violence prevention education statistics are truly impressive. Again, as a parent with daughters in elementary school in our state's public school system, I appeal to this body to pass this important legislation for our public safety.

Thank you Chair Williamson, Vice-Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger and Members of the House Judiciary Committee.

Respectfully,
-Emma Burke