

April 3, 2019

To: House Committee on Judiciary,
From: Lizbeht Marquez
RE: House Bill 3415

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

My name is Lizbeht Marquez, I'm a student at Western Oregon University and I am a Policy Associate for the Oregon Student Association. I am here on behalf of the Oregon Student Association to encourage your support for HB 3415 which would require institutions of higher education to adopt written policies and conduct annual training on sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.

Speaking from my personal experience as a woman, I am always concerned about my safety no matter where I go. Coming to college I was increasingly concerned about my safety due to what I have heard about college campuses having a greater number of sexual assaults, harassment and stalking cases. Being a woman in a higher education institution, it has become second nature to make sure that I don't go out too late, walk fast and constantly look over my shoulder, and walk on streets that are not too dark. Even when walking with a group of friends some of us still do not feel safe. I can recall several instances, especially during finals week where I would have liked to stay studying at the library, but I had to make sure I left before it was too dark outside. Every day I have make sure to follow all these steps to make sure I am safe. Additionally, there is always a fear of what will happen after- how effective will the process be if an assault is reported and what level of service will be provided. The most discouraging part of this process is that there continues to be a lack of response from institutions when survivors choose to report, which further perpetuates sexual assault and sexual harassment.

HB 3415 promotes safe campuses because it ensures that students will receive adequate support that is trauma informed and culturally- responsive if they have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. Furthermore, I believe this bill helps address the bigger issue which is addressing that sexual harassment and sexual assault is a pervasive problem that takes a toll on a person's well-being and ultimately it impedes student's success.

Even though the current administration is failing to address these issues, the Oregon legislature should step up to make sure that Oregon students are protected. Students need to know that no matter who is in an elected official position or what happens at the federal level, they will be protected, and they will receive adequate response, care and justice. Collectively, people should work together to implement policies that encourage students who have survived sexual assault and harassment to report it so that their institution can take appropriate actions to protect and support them.

I highly encourage this committee to pass HB 3415 which would ensure that institutions of higher education implement policies and conduct trainings to adequately support and ensure the safety of their students from sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and stalking.

Thank you for your time.